The Spiritual WARFARE.

OR,

Some SERMONS concerning the Nature of Mortification, right exercise, and spritual advantages thereof:

Whereunto are added other two Sermons, concerning the Mystery of Contentment:

Being the substance of ten Sermons, never heretofore Printed.

By Mr. *Andrew Gray*, late Minister of the Gospel at *Glasgow*.

Col. 3. 5 *Mortifie therefore your Members*, &c. Heb. 13. 5. *Let your conversation be without covetousness*, &c.

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Unto the Sincere, Sin-mortifying, and Soul-contentment-seeking-Christian.

Dear and Loving Friend,

AS the name of the precious Author (who now enjoyeth what he then aspired to, when he preached these following Sermons) will no doubt ingratiat them to thee, so we are perswaded, that the divine Subjects here treated upon, when perused by thee, whose serious design is to study and aspire to what is here prest, may not only prove effectuall to increase thy esteem of the worthy Author, and thy respect to his works; but also may highly advance thy soul, in thy begun work of mortification of sin, of dying to the world, and of having the world crucified to thee that so thou may possess thy soul in patience, and sit down as a contended one, in every state whatsoever, good or bad, letting patience have its perfect work. O! how timely hath the Lord begun with the blessed Author, to make him not only acquainted in his own experience as a Scholar, with the hardest lessons of Christianity, but also to make him a practical Preacher of the spritual and successfull method of learning these so intricat lessons, and of the advantages of studying, or disadvantages of the neglect of the study of them. This we dare say, that in perusing of them, thou shalt find him a work-man, who (if he were alive) needed not to be ashamed, nor afraid of thy censure, if thou be a real student in these spritual duties thy self. For these two or three things (as eminent perfections in a youth) are most remarkable in him. First, that from the speculations and metaphysical contemplations of Schools, he was immediatly, as it were, rapt, not only into the contemplation, but also soul experiencing and powerfull Preaching of the most mysterious points of Christian profession and practice. Secondly, that in the handling of these mysteries, he was free of all youthly vanity and affectation of humane literature, (though he had more then common abilities therein) and having renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully, he preached the Word of God, not as the word of man, but as the Word of God, commending himself to every mans Conscience in the sight of God. Thirdly, that he was gifted of God with such plainness of speech, and wis-

uch an open door of utterance, in delivering these mysteries that he did out-strip and over-reach many of those who entered into the Lords Vineyard long before him, the Lord verifying that in him which is, 2. Cor. 3. 17. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty, *All with singularites and eminencies of a spiritual Preacher, to have been his special mercy from the Lord, to fit him to be eminently a burning and shinning light for the space of about two years in our western Climate, is manifest from what of his works have already come forth to the view of the world, and doth now further appear by these excellent and divine Sermons, upon these two most necessary, but little studied and less practised points of Christian Doctrine, viz.* Mortification of Lusts, and Spiritual Contentment, *never heretofore Printed; wherein the zealous servant of God endeavoureth to awaken this secure generation unto the study of these excellent and necessary duties, by laying before us the necessity of these duties, and the advantages attending the study of them, and the prejudices and disadvantages accompanying the neglecters of the saids duties: As also, to encourage and strengthen in the way, all such as have begun the spritual conflict against sin, and are aiming at perfection in the study of spiritual contentment. He not only presseth the duties, but also pointeth out the right means, whereby a Christian may be helped to attain at last, victory over his lusts, and to sit down contentedly with* Jonah *under the shadow of his Gourd,* Jonah 3. 6. *And be satisfied with* Elijah *to hide himself by the brook* Cherith, *& to drink of the brook, and to have the Ravens to feed him there,* 1. Kings 17. 3, 4. *And to say with* David, *in an universal resignation of himself to the will of God,* 2. Sam. 15. 26. Behold here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him. *And withal thou shalt find intermixed, soul-reviving and comforting resolutions, of the most pressing soul exercises, accompanying such as seriously set about these so much soul-concerning duties, of sins mortification, and spiritual contentment under every lot. That thou mayest read with that same affection that the holy Author preached, and reap the same blessing which was with much prayer wrestled for by him to his hearers, wherein he was not unheard, is the earnest prayer of his soul to God, who is*

Thy Servant in the Gospel of our dearest Lord and Saviour,

A. S.

THE SPIRITUAL WARFARE.

SERMON I.

Rom, 7. 24. *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*

WHen the sword of the Justice of God was coming down upon us, then our blessed *Lord Jesus*, in the infinite depth of his unsearchable love and compassion to self-destroying sinners, cryed forth with a loud voice, that Justice might hold the hand. And as that Ram sacrificed for *Isaac*, so was he willingly content to be *caught in a thicket*, and to become a sportless and everlasting sacrifice for sinners. He was content to be bruised, that so we might pass free, and his Fathers hand might be turned upon the little ones. But, notwithstanding *he had died for our sins and risen for our righteousness*, yet he hath given to all his followers a spiritual warfare to accomplish, so that they should be continually taken up in contending *against principalities and powers, and spiritual wickednesses in high places*; or, as the words are rendred by some, we conceive more appositely, *in heavenly things*. And certainly, there is no discharge in this war, neither any interruption while we are on this side of Eternity: We confess, God might easily have served an Inhibition on all our spiritual enemies, that they should no more oppose themselves against a Believer after Justification; but He in the depth of his unsearchable wisdom, and we may say likewise, infinite love toward his own, hath so contrived their way to heaven, that tho how many Afflictions and Tribulations in our spiritual warfare, we must enter there; It is much indeed for a Christian to die a victor after war, though not a triumpher; tha

must come after death, and the trophies and rewards of our victory, shall then be fully given to us, when our feet shall stand within the gates of the new *Jerusalem*, and when we shall receive these two glorious and everlasting badges of our victory, *a crown set upon our head*, having this written upon it, *it endureth for ever*; A motto, which could never be engraven upon any Crown here below; and *a Palm put in our hands*; and then indeed shall we sing, as those that divide the spoil, when we have led captivity captive, and sitten down upon a Throne, which is established for ever. And we conceive, much divine reflection and holy contemplation upon that precious recompence of Reward, and that high and unconceivable pitch of dignity, into which Believers and Overcomers are to be advanced, would make us with much chearfulness and alacrity undergo this spiritual warfare. And yet all our triumphing is not suspended, till our war be ended? believe me, there is more real joy in the victory and vanquishing of one lust, yea more divine satisfaction, in a serious pursuit and contending with them, though with very small success to our apprehensions, than in the actuall enjoyment & fruition of all thy lusts. Thou may hide sin under thy tongue, and have it pleasant to thy taste; yet at last it shall be as the gall of asps, and the poison of dragons. O! put on so much holy generosity and spiritual ambition, that though Satan should offer unto thee all the kingdoms of the world, that thou may fall down and worship him, thou mayest cry forth in holy zeal and indignation, *Get thee behind me, Satan*; O! that deceitfull oratory and malicious guile wherewith he enamareth immortal souls, and brings them into subjection. O! but the depths of Satan are subtile and great, and he is a man of understanding that can draw them out, and not be ignorant of his devices; and except we be helped by the candle of the Lord, that discovereth the inward parts of the belly, to know these mysterious subtilties of him, whose name is, *A deceiver*, they will remain still riddles and mysteries to us.

But since we are compassed about *with this body of death and there is a law on our members rebelling against the law of our mind*, We should be much in groaning for the day of our redemption, when the lawfull captive may be delivered and

and the prey taken from the mighty, and that blessed decree may come forth, *O prisoners of hope, go forth and shew your selves.* We are afraid that the Christians of this generation, have proclaimed a cessation of arms, and have concluded a treaty of peace with their lusts, and a league not only offensive, but (shall I add this) even defensive; not only, that we shall offend our lusts, but shall defend them: and if once we have sealed this treaty and agreement with our Idols, what can they require more at our hands? We conceive, we may sadly allude unto that word, that there is not one amongst fourty thousand in *Israel*, with whom there is a spear and shield seen, in contending in this holy warfare. O! can such a delusion as this overtake you, that ye can be an overcomer without fighting; Is your strength greater than those that have gone before you, that you think you can accomplish this war in one day, and pursue your enemies till ye overtake and consume them? O! when shall that day be, when we shall be groaning forth daily this mournfull dittay. *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death?*

In the words we conceive first, there is a sweet and pleasant Emphasis in that word (*me*) speaking so much, that if infinite power and grace were capable of any limitation, and there could be any bounds fixed to it. *Paul* did conceive he was the bounds and limits of infinite power and grace; If there were an impossibility for grace to save any sinner, it should be impossible for grace to have saved him, who was *the chiefest of sinners, and less than the least of all Saints.* And if each Christian did look upon himself as the greatest debtor to the Justice of God, his debt to the infinite grace of God should appear more singular.

Secondly, we may perceive, that a Christians happiness doth consist in a sweet exchange of dominion and government: Once sin doth *reign in his mortal body*, and he is under the dominion of his lusts, but then grace doth step in, and exauctorats and dethrones the former King, and doth reign in the temple of our heart. This is clear, *Rom.* 5. last, and that is a remarkable word which is there. *that grace may reign*, the word in the Original doth signifie so much, *that grace may play the King*, Βασιλευσην, and this

fulnes of graces dominion, is that the Apostle would be at here. And certainly there is no repentance of this exchange of Masters: There is much noise and rumor of complaints amongst people in these dayes of the exchange of governments, from one species of government to another, we shall leave these debates unto men who desire to exercise their spirits about them: but sure we are of this, that those who are given up to this change, shall have it pass as most legitimat and lawfull, by the divine approbation, both of angels, and of the soul's of just men now made perfect.

Thirdly, the way that *Paul* taketh here to propose his complaint under the strong prevalency of the body of death, by way of question, *who shall deliver me?* doth not import any hesitation about his perswasion of certainty, that he at last should sing a song of triumph over his lusts; but only that it would be among the richest and the most singular monuments and trophies of the victorie of *Christ*, to save him. *Paul* did (no doubt) conceive that amongst all the royal monuments of *Christs* conquest, that should be, as it were hanged about the walls of that higher and glorious palace, *Paul* should be put in the highest place, as having least merit to bring him there, (if there could be any merit at all) and most love and grace.

Now to come particularly to the words, after *Paul* hath most divinely, set forth that wofull opposition and contradiction, that was betwixt the un renewed part and the renewed, and what strong dominion sin had over him, he doth in these words breathe out a sweet desire to be delivered, not only from his actual corruption, but from his original guilt, which here he calleth *the body of this death*, not only because corruption is a thing which may be easily discerned and known to us, it being (so to speak) a thing which may fall under the object of our sight, being no spirit but a body; but also because of these great multitudes of corruptions that flow from that root of original sin, it having so many different members and parts, which are so diversified, and so compleat, that they may make up a body which body, if it be entertained, shall certainly bring an occasion death. So when he is under the strong convictio of his guilt, and hath had a compleat discovery of himself

you may see his exercise holden forth in these words, *O wretched man*, the word in the original, ταλαιπωρ signifieth one that is wearied with troublesome and continual combats, with little apparent success; and this doth certainly import that he was a man, much and continually taken up in wrestling against his corruptions, and endavouring to bring them into subjection unto the obedience of *Christ Jesus*.

And we may see likewise in these words, the way that *Paul* took to overcome his lusts, he was much in the exercise of Prayer; for the words that we have read, are indeed a short and pathetick Prayer. I conceive that word, which is recorded in *Isa.* 38. 14. *O Lord, I am oppressed, undertake for me*, is a sweet Paraphrase upon these words.

Fourthly, You may see his great and principal suit to have been, *Deliverance from this body of death*: this captive exile was hastening to be delivered, and looking out at the windows of his Prion house, waiting till the Jaylor should come and open the doors, and take his Chains and Fetters from off his Feet: We confess these shall not be fully taken off, till we shall be passing thorow the door of our everlasting Rest, and then that woful and sad complaint shall take his everlasting adieu and farewel; for if we may speak so, the burial-place of sin is before the door of our eternal rest, it then ceaseth to be, when we begin more eminently to have a being; But may we not be ashamed & blush, that we are no more in uttering those inexpressible sighs and groans of the Spirit, under the convi&tion of our sinfulness, since this holy man, who had, no doubt, attained unto a great length in Mortification, who had *plucked out many right eyes*, and *cut off many right hands*, and oftimes turned victor after war, was so much in groaning under his corruption O! but we have inverted strangely the way of Heaven! I conceive practical Antinomianism is an Epidemick Error in those days: Many think that it is below a regenerat man to mourn, and to sit down and lament over the body of death; We know not what it is *to make our bed swim with tears*, and to be *bedewing the way to Zion, when our faces are thitherwards*: Ye conceive that it is a lesson to be practised, and learn

ed by thoſe in a lower Claſs, and thoſe who are learning (ſo to ſpeak) the Rudiments of Chriſtianity, and not to be exerciſed by thoſe, who are now advanced unto the high Claſs of Chriſtianity, that being (as it were in our apprehenſion) a degrading of your ſelves from that pitch of perfection, unto which in your imagination you have attained: but believe me, it is a work not below the eldeſt Chriſtian, nor above the youngeſt *Believer*; and the more one be old in reality in Religion, this work will alwayes be new in their practice. I ſhall only give you that divine Counſel of a holy man, who deſired Chriſtians to to ſet about the mortification of their luſts, as though they had never been taken up in that Duty before; each day to ſet about to mortifie, not as a proficient, but as a beginner, who hath never made any progreſs in that bleſſed work.

Now in ſpeaking upon *Pauls* exerciſe, which is here holden forth, that he was continually exerciſed in wreſtling againſt thoſe corruptions, and that body of death that was in him; we need not ſtand long to prove, that it is the duty of a Chriſtian to be ſo exerciſed and taken up, there is ſomewhat of that implyed in that word, *Act* 24. 16. And it is more clearly preſſed, *Col.* 3: 5. *Eph*, 6. 13. and 1 *Cor*, 5, 7. And, no doubt, if a Chriſtian did reflect more upon the nature of ſin, and conſider that by it, diſformity with God is increaſed, and precious conformity with him loſt; and did we take up ſin in its woful effects, that it worketh death, and envolveth us under the curſe of *a living God*, we would be more conſtant in this ſpiritual warfare. O! but Chriſtians thorow want of the apprehenſion of theſe, are much diſenabled to *ſtand faſt in that liberty wherewith Chriſt hath made them free, and oft-times intangle themſelves again with the yoke of bondage:* So that I conceive, if God were coming to give a name to the Chriſtians of this generation, he might call us *Iſſachar*, becauſe we do now crouch down under two burdens, and are become ſervants unto tribute; and even thoſe that are more refined, and tender in their walk in thoſe dayes, he might call them *Reuben*, becauſe they are unſtable as water, which marreth their excellency.

But

But that which firſt we ſhal ſpeak to, is, how the wreſtlings of a natural man againſt the body of death, and thoſe corruptions that are within him, may be diſtinguiſhed from the wreſtling of one that is really godly.

And firſt we conceive, that it is without debate and controverſie, that a man altogether un-regenerate, by natures light, may be put on to mortifie (if ſo we may ſpeak) and contradict thoſe ſins, which are moſt ſenſual and groſs; natures light including an antipathy and deteſtation of thoſe things within itſelf; though we confeſs, thorow the depravement of our nature, thoſe ſins, which fall under the ſphere of natures mortification, are now abridged unto a ſmall ſum, it being not now refined and clear, as it was when man was in the eſtate of innocency.

Secondly, Another ſort may, from ſome common qualification, oppoſe ſome ſins, as thoſe that are of more heroick and refined ſpirits, will have deteſtation againſt covitouſneſs, and other ſins of that nature, and ſo in ſome ſence may endeavour the mortification of theſe things.

Thirdly, The ſame may a natural man do by ſuch a conviction of the holy Ghoſt, as is but a common work of the ſpirit, he may be put on to mortifie theſe ſins that are more viſible, and ſomewhat groſs in their nature, as is clear from the practice of thoſe who cleanſe the outſide of the plater, and ſtudie to have an outward conformity unto the Law of God, notwithſtanding of that inward and ſecret antipathy, againſt the ſtrictneſs of his Law, yea more, a natural man who hath ſome predominant evil, may endeavour, and will attemp to wreſtle againſt that ſin, which is in a direct line of oppoſition againſt it; as one that is given to that vice of covetouſneſs, he will ſtudy to mortifie that vice of prodigality, thoſe being two oppoſit vices. Now from all theſe we may conclude, that upon every oppoſition which we uſe againſt our corruptions: It is not ſafe to infer, that we are really ingaged in this ſpiritual warfare, it being, we think another thing than the moſt parts of us do imagine it to be: And we confeſs, it is a difficulty even to attain that length of endeavour in mortification, which the natural man by theſe things which we have ſpoken may attain to. But for the difference be-

twixt their debates, the first is this; that a natural and unregenerat man, doth mainly wrestle against these sins, that are outward and more gross, and not so much against these sins that are inward, and falls not under the eye of man: we do not deny but a natural man may wrestle against vain thoughts, and have some small opposition, against the stirring of corruption within his own bosome, but we conceive, that there are two secret sins, which a natural man is not at all taken up in wrestling against, at least very little, *viz.* his *original corruption*, and his *unbelief*; whereas one that is really godly, is much taken up in bearing down these. *Paul* is here taken up in wrestling against his original sin; and *David*, *Psal*, 51 5. compared with *ver.* 2. and 7. is likewise taken up in wrestling against it,& that good man that is recorded in the Gospel, who cryed forth, *Lord, I believe, help my unbelief*, was much taken up in wrestling against his unbelief; and *David*, *Psal.* 77. from the beginning to the 10. *verse* and forward: and certainly, one that was never taken up in wrestling against these two (at least in some small measure and degree) he may hesitate much, whether or not he was ever seriously engaged in this holy Warfare, O! but if many that pass under the notion of Professors were posed, when they did enter into the lists with original corruption, there are many who without breach of truth might say, they never knew what it was to contend against it: And this certainly speaks forth much of our ignorance of original guilt; And believe me, there is more difformity unto the image of God in original sin, than in a thousand actual out-breakings: And it is but in vain for a Christian to attempt the mortification and cutting off of branches, till once he study to pluck up the root, which doth bear *wormwood and gall.*

A second difference is this, a natural man wrestleth against his corruptions, rather because they bring him under the stroak of the Justice of God, than because they are contrary to the holiness of God: Hence it is that the most part of a natural mans wrestling is, when he is under affliction, somewhat of which is pointed out, *Psal.* 78. 34, 35, Now this difference is clear in *Joseph* and *Paul*, who made

made the holiness of God, the great topicks, and common place, whence they did produce all their arguments for contradicting sin, as *Paul* in this Chapter, and *Joseph* in that precious Sentence, *Shall I do this, and sin against God?* but *Cain*, who was a man cut off from the right hand of the Lord, had another principle of contradicting and wrestling against his lusts. *My punishment is greater than I can bear*, Gen. 4. 13. And hence it is that a natural man doth never oppose sin, as it is a cause to interrupt fellowship and communion with God, or from that divine principle of Christs love constraining him: O! but the principle of a natural man wrestling against corruption, be selfish and low; and if there were not a hell, and a place of torment, natural men would take a latitude to themselves, not to mortifie sin. But sure it argueth a divine and heroick spirit, and plausible to them, *who have Christ in them, the hope of glory*, that though there were neither any regard or remuneration of their obedience, neither any punishment of their disobedience, yet simple desire to please God, and not to prophane his holiness which he loveth, doth tye them to obedience. I may confidently say, that these who never knew what it was to have that threefold cord, and that precious triple chain, binding them to obedience, and inducing them to mortifie their lusts, to wit, *The holiness of God, the fear to interrupt communion and fellowship with him, and the love of Christ*, they may question, whether or not ever they were seriously engaged in this holy warfare: But withal we do not deny, but the fear of punishment is likewise a most divine principle of mortification, in its own place; but except their be somewhat higher, it is not to be build upon.

The third difference is this, that a natural man studieth more to restrain sin, than to mortifie it; for he is a man that resteth satisfied with the restraint of the actings of sin, though there be no mortification of that vicious inclination which is in the man: this is clear in *Haman*, Esth. 3 5. in *Saul*, 1 *Sam.* 24. 16, 17. and following verses, compared with 1 *Sam.* 26. 2. and in the Scribes and Phaisees, *Matth.* 23 25, But, the mortification that the heart requireth, is of a higher nature, *Gal.* 5, 24, Where we

are commanded *to crucifie the flesh with the affections a*
lusts, not only to restrain the act, but to mortifie the h
bits: we confess it is a difficulty to determine the diffe
ence betwixt the restraint of sin, and mortifying of sin, a
this maketh it the more difficult, that sins which are r
ally mortified, sometimes a Christian may be overtaken
commit, which i conceive seldome or never holds of fi
that are more gross, but holds oft-times of sins that are
a lower nature and degree. Yet these things may a litt
point forth the difference, first, a Christian who hath
mortified, is filled with much divine joy and satisfactio
in the mortifying of it, which we conceive partly do
proceed from this, that a Christian, when he is honour
to mortifie a lust, he ordinarily then receives the intim
tion of his peace and interest in God, in a more lively a
spiritual way. And, secondly, because at that time
he doth receive much precious and sweet communion wi
God, his soul then is in life; somewhat of this is point
out to us, *Rom.* 8. 13. and *Rom.* 7. 24. compared with ve
25. Thirdly, the difference may be known by this, th
when a man hath been much in the exercise of fasting a
prayer, for the mortifying of such a lust and idol, a
hath not attained to this with great facility, there is gre
appearance that upon the desisting of tentation, and th
actings of his spirit to commit such a thing, such a lust
mortified, and not restrained only; there is somewh
of this pointed forth, *Matth.* 17. 20, 21. Where it is sai
that power of casting out of devils goeth not forth but
fasting and prayer. We conceive the place is principa
ly to be understood concerning the faith of miracl
though by proportion and analogy it may hold of sanctif
fying faith: O! our lusts in these dayes do rather go out
than are cast out, they rather die to us than we to them
Fourthly, the frame of spirit which we have after morti
fing of a lust, may let us see whether it be a real wor
or only some restraint for a time: a man that doth attai
such a length, as really to mortifie and crucifie any lust
is much taken up in the exercise of Praise, *Rom.* 7. 25
1 *Cor* 15. 55. 56. 57. He is under conviction of his du
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ons a… possibility of blessing him as he ought to be: but we think
the h… when lusts are restrained only. and not mortified, that
diffe… man is not so much taken up in the exercise of praise, O!
sin, a… What heavenly Elogies and Songs of praise have the Saints
re… penned unto the unsearchable and omnipotent grace of
ken… Christ, when they have been enabled to overcome, and
of fi… crucifie a lust, *Their souls have been enditing a good matter*
t are… *concerning the praises of the King, their tongue hath been as the*
a lit… *pen of a ready writer.* And this may, lastly, point out the
ath f… difference; Sins that are mortified do not for the most
fact… part presently recur so, as to obtain victory over the Chri-
y do… stian; we confess, Satan, to weaken our confidence, may
nour… assault us with tentations to commit that iniquity, that so
ntim… we may be brought to call in question our real and spiri-
ly a… tual victory over it: but if lusts be only restrained, It can-
ne … not be long away from obtaining victory: this is clear from-
n wi… *Esth.* 4. 10. compared with the following verses, as like-
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h ver… 26. 2.

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s gr… ther sad occurrence that doth befall him, or through some
nd t… sharp and sudden conviction of a commonly enlightened
lust… conscience; but he that is really taken up in this spiritual
ewh… warfare, hath a constancy in maintaining of it, at least in his
s sai… endeavours: this is clear from *Acts* 24. 16. and *Col.* 3. 5.
but … and indeed that woful inconstancy that we have in this
ncip… spiritual Warfare, doth evidence our little real engage-
racl… ment in the Work. Are there not many here, who can in-
fanct… terrupt the warfare many Weeks, & yet not be much under
o our… ther the discovery of their losse, or under any impressi-
them… on of sorrow, because of it? Sure, if this were believed,
nort… that there may be more lost in one day, than can be gained
wort… in many, we would endeavour to be more constant: O!
attai… our grace is a tender thing, and we ought to keep it *as the*
y lus… *apple of our eye.* Alas, there are but too many, who slack-
7. 2… en their endeavour against sin, and will ly idle many days,
du… and yet are ready to think, that when they please, they
n mean shake themselves of their lusts as at other times; but
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to these we shall only say this, beware, lest that dispensation once meet you, that when ye shall begin to shake your selves of your lusts, and of your bands, your strength shall be gone from you, and then your enemies shall lead you captive, and put out your two eyes. O! but sometimes our corruptions get such advantage over us, that we may say, *Video meliora, proboque, deteriora sequor.*

The fifth difference, they go not about this Warfare from a right principle, which the Christian doth, the one wrestles in their own strength, but the other resting upon the strength of *Jehovah, that everlasting Strength*, this is pointed at, *Rom.* 8. 13. there is a command, that a wrestling Christian studies alwayes to obey: a Christian uses much that precious divinity of *David*, 1 *Sam.* 17. 45, 46. when they go to War. And alas! there are many that are living under the apprehension of this Warfare, who in the day of their accompts, we fear shall be found never really to have entered in the lists *with principalitits and powers, and spiritual wickednes.* And it is no wonder that many of us be foiled by the hand of our iniquities, we not having fitten down first when we engaged to consult; whether we with our ten thousand, were able to meet him that came against us with his twenty thousand; we engaged without the apprehension of difficulty, and so no wonder we be overcome without much difficulty. Now examine your selves by these, whether indeed you be engaged in this spiritual Warfare.

Now that which, secondly, we shall speak to, shall be to those advantages that a Christian may have by being continually taken up in this spiritual warfare. The first advantage is this, it is an excellent way to obtain victory over these lusts and Idols, wherewith we are beset: we conceive it is no wonder that this be the great and generall complaint of Christians in these daves, that they are led captive by the hand of their iniquities, & that the voice & noise of the spoiler is so much heard with them, because they are not taken up in a constant debating and contending with sin; there is somewhat of this pointed out to us, *Rev.* 3. 5. Where though that promise be principally understood of the reward of an overcomer, when he shall be above, that *he shall*

be

e clothed in white, yet we think it may include this, that a man that is in the way, and constant exercise of overcoming, hall attain to much divine conformity with God and uch divine difformity with the world: and to those who re much discouraged with their little success and apparent ictory in this war, notwithstanding of their constancy in debate with their lusts, we shall only speak that for their omfort by way of allusion, which is Dan. 7. 12. *Their dominion shall be taken from them, but their lives be prolonged for a season and time*: the dominion of your lusts shall be taken away, though their lives may be prolonged for your exercise and dependence on him for a short time and season: ye may have tribulation in this spiritual warfare *ten dayes*, but be convinced of this, that the day is comming, when ye shall sit down upon a Throne, after ye have overcomes; as *Christ* also did sit down, after he had overcome; once ye shall stand and defend the field when all your lusts shall flee as chaff before the wind: albeit oft times our discouragement speaks that word which *Saul* spake to *David* 1. *Sam.* 17. 33. (when we are to wrestle with the devil, *thou art not able to go against the Philistine to fight with him, for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth:* yet a Christian ought to answer, *through God I shall do valiantly*.

Secondly, It is the way to attain much divine consolation, as is clear, *Rev.* 2. 17. *To him that overcometh will I give to eat the hidden Manna*, which is (as we conceive) in part, he shall have of the consulations of the holy Ghost, though it be principally understood of *Jesus Christ*. O! what a divine contentment and unspeakable solace of mind doth a Christian attain by entertaining a constant enmity against his lusts. I am perswaded, that, that which doth interrupt a Christians peace much, is the interruption of that holy and divine enmity, which we ought to have against sin; believe me, there is more real satisfaction to be found in one dayes serious debate against sin, than in having an eternity of enjoyment of the most flowrishing pleasures in the world. ye *may sow in tears* in this warfare, but *ye shall only reap in joy*: the first part may be true of the men of the world, in their pursuits after their pleasures, they do sow in tears; but

It

it was never yet heard nor left upon record, that they did reap in joy; there was alwayes a correspondence betwixt their seed-time, and their harvest; but there is a divine transmutation and disproportion betwixt the seed-time of a Christian and his harvest, unspeakable joy can-spring off the root of their most bitter sorrows.

Thirdly, it is an excellent way to maintain the faith of our interest in God, this is clear from *Rev.* 2, 17. Where *Christ* giveth this promise to the overcomers, that he will give them *a new name*, which holdeth forth their adoption and interest in him, which no man can know, but he that receiveth it; and certainly there is nothing that over-cloudeth a Christians hope so much, nor darkneth his interest, as an intermission in this holy warfare, Yea more particularly he attaineth to the most certain persuasion of his victory over his corruption: there is somewhat of this pointed out, 2 *Tim.* 4. 8. *I have fought the good fight of faith*, and hence he doth infer, that there is laid *up for him a crown of righteousness*, which doth certainly import and include in its bosome, that *Paul* upon his constant endeavour to wrestle against corruption, did attain to much certainty of overcoming: I think it is altogether impossible for a Christian, intermitting this holy warfare, to incertain any divine or assured persuasion that there is a blessed issue and period unto his warefare. And we think it is from this, that of late his own cry out; *who can stand before the Children of Anak?* and do conclude to make to themselves a Captain, and go back unto Egypt: though we think, that if we were constant in this, we would be taught, not only to entertain a holy undervaluing of them, but likeways a divine certainty of overcoming. I think a Christian hath not only that advantage by being constant in this warfare, that he is brought to an assured persuasion, that he shall overcome, but likewise doth most sweetly conclude, that the strength of their corruption is gone, therefore they may go up and warr with them.

Fourthly, by maintaining this warfare, a Christian getteth much experience; by it he attains to much distinct apprehensions of the deceitfullness of him, who is *the deceiver of the brethren*. We are perswaded, that these who are constant

lant in this warfare, can ſpeak moſt to thoſe ſingular ſub-
ltles of Satan, and can moſt diſtinctly fathom theſe deep
evices of his; as likewayes, they can moſt take up the un-
archable deceitfullneſs of their own heart; and there is
o doubt, no ſmall advantage in the taking up of theſe two,
oth that we may be provocked unto ſelf-diffidence, as like-
vayes to have our confidence and hope much repoſed upon
Jeſus Chriſt, who is the the *Captain of our ſalvation*, that we
ay be conſtrained in that day, when the blaſt of the ter-
ible one is as a blaſt againſt a wall, and when the archer
oth ſhoot at us, and grievouſly wound us to go unto him,
whoſe name is *an everlaſting ſtrength*, that ſo by his ſtrength
we may be enabled to overcome.

That which thirdly we ſhall ſpeak to, ſhall be, what is
he reaſon Chriſtians do obtain ſo ſmall victory in this ſpi-
itual warfare: and in this, we ſhall not only ſpeak to thoſe
moral and culpable cauſes, why Chriſtians do not obtain
much victory, but we ſhall likewiſe ſpeak a little, to theſe
divine and precious ends that God hath in denying victory
o his own, who in ſome ſmall meaſure are entertaining a
conſtant enmity againſt their corruption. And as for the
irſt, it doth proceed from too much ſelf-conceit and pre-
umptous opinion of their own ſtrength; I am perſwaded,
hat that which made *Peter* ſo capable to reſiſt the tenta-
ions of denying *Chriſt*, did much proceed from that word
which is *Matth.* 26. 33. *Though all men ſhould be offended
ecauſe of him, yet he would never be offended.* Therefore we
hink, that the firſt and moſt excellent way to obtain victo-
y is; to be dwelling under the apprehenſions of our own
weakneſs to overcome, that holy & divine paradox being al-
wayes made true, that *when we are weak, then we are ſtrong*:
nd we may enter into the liſts with our corruptions, hav-
ng no confidence in the fleſh, but deſiring in the name of
he *God of Iſrael* to wreſtle with the ſtrongeſt *Goliah* that we
meet with. O! but humility is a moſt ſweet and ſtrong
armour, wherewith a Chriſtian ought to be clothed,
when he goeth to War: he muſt walk in that holy
ear, which may be conſiſtent with faith, and enter-
ain ſo much faith, and ſpiritual confidence. as may
ot altogether cut off holy fear.

There

There is a second cause, which is, too much intanglement with the pleasures, and affairs of the World: It is impossible for one who is taken up in the continual noise and buz of things here below, to be an overcomer; hence *Paul* presseth, 2 *Tim.* 2. 4. that *no man that warreth ought to intangle himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a souldier*; and that word, 1 *Cor.* 9. 25. *He that striveth for the mastery must be temperat in all things*: O! oft-times through the deceitfulnes of the world, and pleasures thereof, we are laid captive by the hand of our iniquities, and do fall before our enemies. I know nothing so suitable and helpful for a Christian to overcome, then to be denyed to these three cardinal and fundamental temptations, by which Satan standeth to allure us, which are *the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life*, that our eye may not take in any sweet or pleasant representations of the transient vanities of the world, neither may our sensual appetite be taken with the taste of these bitter and most sowre delights, neither may be ambitious in the enjoyment, and actual possession of them.

There is a third cause, which is, that we are not taken up in the exercise of watchfulnes: this is certain that the exercise of this grace, hath most divine influence for the overcoming of our corruptions, as is clear from *Matt.* 26 41. and *Mark* 14 38. That ought to be the great Motto of a Christian souldier, which ought to be engraven upon his Armes, *watch*: Watchfulnes is not only effectuall for overcoming in this respect, that it doth discover unto us our temptations, when they begin to assail us, but likewise it takes up both the subtilty and strength of our temptations, as likewise it taketh up the weakness and inability in the Christian to resist that temptation; and of those three be attained, seldom, or never is a Christian much foiled by the hand of his iniquities, therefore that which I would say to a Christian Souldier, I would say unto all, *watch*.

There is a fourth cause, which is, that we are not much taken up in the exercise of secret prayer, prayer being indeed that noble and spiritual weapon by which Chri-

stians do overcome, as is clear from *Matth.* 26. 41. and 2 *Cor.* 12. 7. where *Paul*, when *a messenger of Satan was buffeting him*, was constrained *to beseech the Lord thrice*; a practice much unknown by the most part of Christians who know not what it is *to pray without ceasing*, when they are tempted much without interruption. I think of all the weapons that almost a Christian taketh to resist temptation, this is the most effectual; for when *Satan* seeth that a Christian improves the temptation so much for his own advantage, as to make it an errand to go to God, then he desists and gives over to contend: I confess a Christian may in so far glory in his infirmities, as they gave him an occasion to converse more frequently with God O! but had we spent more of our time in conversing with *God*, when we were alone, we might have attained many sweet trophies, and fruits of our victory, which now we have only in hope and expectation.

There is a fifth cause, which is, that we are not much taken up in the exercise of Faith, which is that general piece of Armour that *Paul* doth prescribe unto the Christian, *Eph.* 6. 16. *Above all things, taking the shield of faith, whereby ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked*: There is that sweet note of commendation put upon this Armour, that there is no temptation a Christian can meet with, but through the exercise of Faith, he may be able to overcome it; hence *Paul* saith, ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the Devil: This piece of Armour is not only defensive, but we may say, in some measure, it is offensive likewise: now Faith helps a Christian to overcome his temptations and corruptions wherewith he is assaulted, not only by laying hold on the infinite strength of him who is the *Captain of Salvation*, but likeways, Faith is that grace which hath the most subtile and divine eye, in taking up the strength of corruption: O! but a man much in the exercise of Faith, is a man that can passe a most accurat sentence upon his lusts and idols wherewith he doth rencounter: there is nothing impossible to the believing man: and I think, if there be any grace by which a Christian doth ascend most to a divine similitude unto the omnipotency of *God*, it is by

the

the grace of *Faith*: hereby is the Christians power most invested. O! but Faith will make those that are weak strong: Therefore we would desire you to be exercising your confidence upon him, who is that *munition of rocks*, that so through him ye may overcome, as likewayes through the word of your Testimony.

This lastly may be a cause, that after some small victory over our lusts, we are ordinarily entangled with security, not knowing what it is to make the victory over one lust a sweet provocation to the overcoming of another. I think (If we may allude unto that word which is, *Psal.* 18. 57.) it ought much to be the practice of a Christian *to pursue his enemies till he overtake them, and never to turn again till they are consumed*, that by the strength of him who is *Jehovah*, we *may run thorow a troop*, and by *our God we may leap over a wall*. O! but constant exercise in this War, never proclaiming a cessation of armes, would make a speedy riddance of all our adversaries, *he then (should) teach our hands to war*, and *by our armes a bow of steel might be broken*. I think that which *David* so little successful over his lusts after some small victory, was his security as likewayes in *Peter*. There is no discharge in this war till death, and then we shall receive our everlasting arriers for all our toil.

Now to the second, those divine ends that our *Lord* hath in this, why Christians do not attain victory over their lusts, though in some small measure endeavouring constantly in war; it doth either proceed from this, that *God* knows that we can better improve a wrestling estate than an overcoming estate, while we are here below; we can better dispense with war, than we can with victory. Therefore, while we are travelling thorow this wilderness he doth still keep us in exercise with serpents and scorpions: or it doth much proceed from this, that we may be kept in a constant dependence upon *God*, and may intertain a holy and constant correspondence with him. It is certain, that if we were not constrained to walk with *God*, through a principle of Necessity, seldom would we walk with him through a principle of a Duty, or from a principle of Love, for it is obvious to a Christian upon

s. Secret ſearch, that we walk moſt with God, when we nd moſt in need of him: it doth likewiſe proceed om this, that we may be kept humble while we are here low, and that we may not be exalted above meaſure, alſo, that the grace and power of our *Bleſſed Lord Je-*, in helping us to overcome, may be rendered more nſpicuous and evident, this being the great ſtage in hich *Chriſts* power doth moſt eminently act and appear er our weakneſs, and the apprehenſions of their inſu-rable difficulties, wherewith we are beſet and often vercome.

Now to ſhut up our diſcourſe, we ſhall deſire, that in der ye may given up your names unto *Jeſus Chriſt* to fight nder his royal banner, and believe me, though your rruptions were never ſo ſtrong, yet at laſt he ſhall o-rcome them, the certainty wherof is made out unto you this, that your bleſſed *head, hath led captivity captive,* d *is now exalted at the right hand of Majeſty on high*: and e hope and expectation of that bleſſed iſſue may make ur rejoyce *with joy unſpeakable and full of glory.*

SERMON II.

al. 5. 24. *And they that are Chriſts have crucified the fleſh with the affections and luſts:*

O! When ſhall that great and excellent wonder be ſeen in heaven, which *John* did ſee. *Rev.* 12. 16, to behold the inviſible Church, and thoſe that are expectants of Heaven, which is t woman clothed and adorned with that ſpotleſs and autiful righteouſneſs of a crucified Saviour, which is inted out, by her being clothed with the *Sun*, and to regulat by the *Doctrine* of the twelve Apoſtles, which indeed thoſe precious Stars that will bring us unto the ace where *Chriſt* lyes, and will ſweetly conduct us unto m; and with that to have that great Idol under our feet, *world*, the divine emblem of which is the Moon, cauſe it is ſubject to many viciſſitudes and changes, and

hath

hath most different and contrary aspects: though we con-
ceive, that if many Christians were to be painted, we migh
fix the Moon upon their head, for they use not the Worl
as their servant, but as their Master; Mortification is a
exercise that doth not sute with Flesh and Blood, it h
hard saying to a man settled upon the dregs of nature. an
yet incorporat in that old stock: O! but it is sad Div
nity to many, that except one die with Christ, they ca
not reign with him, we must win to the fellowship of h
sufferings, and be conformable unto his death, befor
we attain to the resurrection from the dead: we love t
divide those things that *God* hath conjoyned, to tak
Christ for righteousness and salvation, but not for a Kin
and for sanctification: and it is as an evidence unto wi
Solomon, that she was not the true mother of the chil
who pleaded for the division of it, so it may be supposed
that he who will not take whole *Christ*, but would hav
him divided, is not one that is predestinated to the ado
tion of Children: we confess there are many that lov
Christs coat, rather than his graces, and if they pursu
after those, it is more after those graces that are adornin
than saving: And we conceive that there are these thr
graces that a hypocrite doth most pursue after; There
the grace of prayer, the grace of knowledge, and t
grace of humility, and of the last we may say, a hypocri
may endeavour to parson at it, but there is alwayes wit
in his bosome some convictions of his little attainment
It is impossible for a hypocrite to think himself nothing
and O! that we could once attain to that precious lang
of Christianity, as to be entertaining a holy oblivion
our attainments, and a sanctified memory of our im-
fections; that the former may be written, as it were in t
sand, and the latter migh be engraven in the fleshly tab
of our heart, and kept constantly upon record, we coul
there is not much of our leaf that withers in these day
but much of our fruit withers and decayes: O! is not m
become so brutish and ignorant, that he may be sent un
the beasts of the field to be instructed of that which is h
duty: *Solomon* makes mention of four beasts upon t
earth which are little and exceeding wise, *Prov.* 30.
25,

, 26, 27, 28. all which may teach us ſome ſpritual do-
ine; firſt there are the Ants, who may teach us that
ce of divine prudence, and Chriſtian policy, in laying
ld on our occaſions and opportunities, who though they
not a ſtrong people, yet provide their meat in ſummer;
d no doubt, we ſhould be fighting with our ſpritual ene-
ies, while it is the day, for the night cometh wherein
man can fight: actions done in ſeaſon, addes a great
al uf luſter and perfection to them, every thing being
autifull in its ſeaſons: Secondly, there are the Conies,
ho may teach us that grace of denyal, to diſtruſt our own
ength, and in the day of ſtraits to run unto him who is
at Munition of rocks, when the blaſt of the terrible one, is
a ſtorm againſt a wall; for they being a feeble people,
ake their houſes in the rocks; And no doubt; Atheiſme
d Idolatrie are the two great impediments of mortifica-
on, too much confidence in our ſelves, which is Idolatrie,
d our too much diffidence in God, which is our Atheiſme.
oreover, we may go to the locuſts, which would teach us
at primitive grace of unity, who though they want a King,
t go forth by bands: and laſtly, we may go to the ſpider,
hich may teach us that grace of ſpritual mindedneſs, and
aſpiring after thoſe ſublime and excellent things of God,
r they are in Kings palaces: and, O! to be more con-
rſant with heaven, and thoſe things that are above: this
uld make us to diſtaſte theſe lower ſprings, and they
ould be to us as the waters of Marah.

But to come more particularly to the words, you have
ny precious things concerning mortification holden forth
hich is that precious and cardinal grace of which we in-
nd at this time to ſpeak; you have the infinit advantage of
is grace held forth, to wit, that ſuch do meet with di-
ne intimation of their intereſt in Chriſt, and that they are
hriſts, which indeed the high elevation of a Chriſtian: and
is is clear from the words, that ſuch an one may from this
ther, that his name was written in the ancient and pre-
ous records of heaven: And no doubt, little divine wreſt-
g with our corruptions, makes us to have the extract of
r peace ſo often withdrawn to our ſenſe; there is this
d forth concerning it, the extenſive nature of mortifica-

tion, that a Christian ought not only to mortifie the flesh which is original sin, which is so called, not only becau of that wofull knot of amity and affection that is betwixt u and our lusts, hence that word, *no man ever hated his ow flesh*; O! those invisible knots of union that are betwixt u and our lusts, but it is so called, because sin hath contami nat the whole man, so that *from the crown of the head to the so of the foot*, there is nothing that is not defiled, as likeways because during our abode in those tents of mortality, we mu have this woful and sad companion, and there is an unchang able and unalterable decree of heaven, that during our tim of minority, we should have that bad associat; but more Christian should mortifie his affections, which are his pr dominant lusts, to which our affections are so much joyne and our soul doth so much go out after; as also his lusts which are the first motions and risings of corruption wit In one, and with all may comprehend the eschewing the sin shadows and appearances of evil. *Prov.* 4, 14, 15. E ter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of vil men, avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass awa our mortification, should be als much of our invisible idol as our visible lusts.

There is this likewayes held forth, the difficulty an painfullness of this work under this notion of *Crucifyin* which was one of the most painfull deaths: we conceiv that there are many who are of that mans humour, who, w sowing upon the grass, cryed forth, *utinam hoc esset laborar* there is no doubt, more difficulty in this then we apprehen we must not ly in the bed of ease, if we intend to be mort fying Christians, we must wrestle as princes with God, we prevail; the longsomness of this work is also pointed under the notion of crucifying, it being a longsome deat we cannot ordinarly fight and triumph in one day; th ambitious letter of *Cesars*; will not hold here, *Veni, Vi Vici*; we must die mortifying and strugling with our c ruptions, and when one of our feet is within the bord of eternity to be sighing out that lamentation *O wretch man that I am*, &c. You have also the intensive nature mortification, that a Christian should be content with t thing but the death of his lusts, which is held forth in th wo

ord, *crucifie*, O! to bind our self with a holy oath and ow, not to dwell in much contentment, till we have got- n the life of our predominant lust: we must not give our lols quarter upon the most plausible and fairest termes of bjection, otherwayes, if ye do. I shall not say that word hich the Prophet spake to *Ahab*, that *your life shall go for* ; but sure I am that confederacy shall be broken, and kely not without many sorrows to your spirits. There lastly, the certainty of this victory held forth in that ord, *they have crucified*; It is here in the preterite time, it were already accomplished and brought to pass; and o doubt, this may make us to rejoyce *with joy unspeakable and full of glory*, that once we shall have a triumphant ng put in our mouth.

Now before we shall speak unto any of these, we shall eak to some few things as previous to be known: We shal ot dwell long in pointing out the nature of Mortification; e conceive it thus, It is a divine quality of the immortal ul derived from the efficacy and vertue of *Christs* death, hereby the strength of sin is impared, and its dominion ken tway so that we should not totally nor with full con- nt yeeld our self unto that iron-yoke of our iniquity: Nei- er shall we stand long to prove that it is your duty to be uch in the practice of this duty, It is clear not only from l. 3, 5. *Mortifie therefore your members which are upon Earth*, but also from 1. *Pet*, 1. 15, 16. and 2. *Cor.* 1. it ought to be our great design and aim to bring all ose things in subjection, which stand in opposition, *Jesus Christ*, and it is the noble prerogative of those ung men. 1. *Joh.* 2. 13. 14. that they have over- me that wicked one, and hath in some measure trod- n Satan under their feet.

But we shall speak a little unto this, first, whether or not Christian can fall again to the committing of that sin which ce they have mortified and repented for, and withall hath ceived an act of pardon? We conceive indeed (so far we know) there can be no explicit proof given of such case in Scripture, that ever any of those that were heirs the grace of life, did fall into that sin which they had ce mortified and repented for; but however, we are con-

fident to averr, that it is not inconsistent with a gracio
estate, which we conceive is clear, not only from his name
but from his promises and from his commands; doth n
that name, that he is *a healer of our back-slidings*, and t
repairer of our breaches, and that name, *he will multiply to p*
don, speak out that a Saints relapsing into a mortified s
doth not put him without hope. *Isa.* 55. 7. *Hos.* 14.
But that he may have confidence that he shall not die b
live, and declare the wondrous works of the Lord, thou
God may speak that word to him, which *Absalom* spoke
Hushai, is this thy kindness to thy friend: and withall, d
not his promises speak this *Jer.* 3. 22. *I will heal yo*
back-slidings, and do not his commands speak it, *Jer.*
1. 12. 14. 22. How often is back-sliding Israel exhorte
to return, and he who imposed that commandment upo
us, to forgive our brother untill seventy and seven times,
he return and repent, will not his bowels be moved with
him, towards a back sliding heifer? But withall, to pr
voke you to beware of that sin, to sin after repentance a
mortification, we shall propose these things. First, su
a sin doth creat and beget much hardness and stupidity
heart, so that *our own back-sliding do reprove us*, and
come not only our sin, but our punishment; and when G
hath spoken peace to us, should we again turn to folly? S
condly, there is this to dissuade you, that such Apost
as this, makes a Christian to lose the sence and comfor
table assurance of their Interest, so that sometimes th
will be even razing, as it were, the foundations: O!
back-sliders in heart are filled with the fruit of their o
way, and are made to walk *in darkness, and to have* no
light: it is much for a Christian to keep fast his hand
when after this manner, he hath lost his feet.

Fourthly, such an one doth ordinarily give much rel
and much liberty to his corruptions; that is indeed, th
year of Jubile and release, as is clear from *Jer.* 5.
where these two are joyned: and may not the nature
aggravating circumstances of that sin, make you to esch
it? is it not a sinning against light? is it not a sinning
God, after he hath appeared unto you twice? So that this
be the manner of your bemoaning your self. If it had b

enemy that had thus done. O Lord, thou mighteſt have
rn it, but that it ſhould be one, whom thou didſt conde-
end to make thy familiar, and to take ſweet counſel toge-
er with, that hath lift his heel againſt thee; this no doubt
an inquiry of deep dye; and we ſhall only ſay this, that
is imprinted upon the effigie of Godly *Judah*. *Gen.* 38.
6. that after his firſt fall with *Tamar*, he *knew her again no*
more: And, no doubt, it were your advantage to obey that
unſel, *let him that ſtandeth take heed leſt he fall*,

Now that which ſecondly we would ſpeak to is, to pro-
oſe ſomething to you, by which you may know your growth
Mortification, ſince there are many that delude them-
lves in this, ſuppoſing that their luſts are really mortified,
hen they are but ſleeping, and that they are really caſt out,
hen they only go out for a ſeaſon: thoſe are they that
are pure in their own eyes, and yet are not cleanſed from their
iniquity. And before we ſhall ſpeak any thing to this, we
ould have you conſidering theſe things. Firſt, that there
ay be a growth of leaſes, where there is not much growth
fruit; a plentifull meaſure of profeſſion, and yet much
arrenneſs in practice; there are ſome whoſe leaf doth not
her, though their fruit doth much decay, who have ma-
ſpecious appearances, and yet cannot ſay that the root
the matter is with them; and withall we would ſay,
at there may be ſome real growth to the fruit, when there
not much growth to the root, ſo that though we ſpread
rth our branches, yet we do not caſt forth our root as
Lebanon; we grow ſometimes more in prayer, and know-
dge, and joy of the *Holy Ghoſt*, then in mortification and
milſty, though there be a promiſe for both their growths,
Hoſ. 14 5. 6, Now there is this ſecondly, that we would
ve you knowing, that there is a divine neceſſity for Chri-
ans to grow ſomewhat in all the graces of the Spirit, and
bring forth fruits even in old age, to be advancing in mor-
cation, to be aſcending up in a divine conformity with
d, till we ſhall be made like unto him: we confeſs in-
ed, there are ſome ſad interruptions, when we almoſt
get that we were purged from our old ſins; And this ne-
ſſity of growth, appears not only from this, that *Chriſt*
the head of believers, and they his members, this ſimi-

litude the Apostle useth twice to express, Christians growth *Eph.* 4. 15. 16. *Col.* 2. 10. and no doubt, since *Christ* the head, and we the members, we must grow till there be a divine conformity and resemblance betwixt us and our head; and are not we predestinat unto this divine and noble end, *Rom.* 8. 29. and must not we purifie our selves, and endeavour to wash our selves from our spots, through the precious blood of sprinkling, that *we may be holy, as he who hath called us, is holy.* And more, this is one end of the fullness, which was communicate unto *Jesus Christ our precious head,* ever *to make us compleat.* Col. 2. 9. 10. As his fullness is for our growth, so our growth is for the making up of his fulness, *Eph.* 1. 23. Mystical *Christ* will not be compleat, till once all his Members grow up *to the stature of the fulness of Jesus Christ,* and so from that, there is such an invisible knot of union and supernatural relation betwixt us and *Christ,* that a Christian must grow, and if once the first draughts and imperfect lineaments of *Christs* image be engraven on our soul, he will bring it unto perfection, since this is his noble prerogative, that his work is perfect. There is this also that speaks a necessity of a Christians growth in mortification, and all the graces of the spirit, that the faithfulness of all the persons of the blessed Trinity. is engaged for this, and is laid in pawn; it is clear that the faithfulness of the first person of the blessed Trinity is laid in pledge from *Psal.* 92. 14. 15. *They shall still bring forth fruit in old age, to shew that the Lord is upright,* or faithfull: which we conceive doth relate to that promise made by the *Father* to the *Son,* in that ancient and eternal transaction, *Isa.* 53. 10. And is not the faithfulness of the *Son* laid in pledge? he is not this commandment of the *Father* laid upon him, *that of all that are given to him, he should lose none, but raise them up at the last day,* Joh. 6. 39. 40. so that as Christ must be answerable to his charge, he must present all the elected ones unto the *Father,* which presupposeth their growth in grace, and their being *made meet for the inheritance of the Saints in light*; and is not the faithfulness of the third person of the blessed Trinity likewayes engaged in this? in that it is his great work, to apply *Christs* purchase, to reveal unto us the whole mind of *God.* and

ommunicate all things that are needful for us to know, nd to guide us in all truth. *Joh.* 16. 13. And if this e his work, will he not accomplish it, and bring it unto erfection? all which great works that are committed unto the *Holy Ghost* to do, have that sweet and precious re. it, *growth in grace.* There is this thirdly, that we would ave you knowing, that there are some graces of the spirit, f whose growth, before we can judge, there must be a me allotted; grace is not like the grass of the field, which roweth in a night, and perisheth in a night: it is a wo= ll practice among many, they begin to search their growth, efore they have well begun to grow: we would rather ounsel you to grow, then to search your growth; though is indeed a Christians duty to take notice, *to go up early the vineyards, to see if the vine flourish, whether the ten. er grape appear, and the pomegranats bud forth*, this is lear from *Cant.* 7. 12, and from *Psal*, 63. 8. where *Da- id* taketh notice, not only of his following after *God*, but hat his soul did follow hard after him: but if in this we may llude, we shall say this unto you, *Judge nothing before the ime*, let your graces grow before you judge of their growth. nd there is lastly that we would say, that growing in race and the fruits of the Spirit, is a mistery that is more ken up by faith, then by sense; we must grow by faith, nd by Faith we will best discern, especially under deser- ion, and when we are walking under a cloud, and *Christ* arves out bitter things unto us: we confess indeed, when e are dandled upon his knee, and our cup of divine con- olations is running over. and he covereth to us a table in he wilderness; then our growth may be known by sense.

But as to the question we proposed, we shall give you hese evidences of your growth in Mortification: There s this first, those are admitted to read their names to those ncient and precious Records of Heaven, and to know that hey were engraven upon his heart, before ever the cor= erstone of the world was laid; this is clear from *Rev.* 2. 7. and 2. *Tim.* 4. 8. and the ground of it is this, that hose who are wrestling as Princes with their lusts, and en- uring the heat of the day, he lets them see a sight of the rown, and of that eternal felicity, that so they may endure

that

that good fight of faith, and perſevere to the end, th
they may obtain that crown of life. And there is this groun
of it alſo, becauſe ſuch are much in the exerciſe of thoſ
two cardinal and architectonick graces of the ſpirit, *faith*
and *prayer*, by which much divine familiarity and fellowſhi
with God, is attained, and, ſo faith doth increaſs with th
increaſs of God.

There is this ſecond evidence, when our luſts have n
ſuch power to diſturb us in holy duties, as in praye
hearing and meditating; If you have diſpoſſeſſed thoſ
unclean things, and can go about theſe duties, with a gre
deal of more divine ſerenity, and compoſedneſs of ſpirit
but if this be wanting, it is an evidence of no great grow
in Mortification, as is clear from *Jer.* 23. 11. and *Ezek.*
33. 31. And we conceive, that this is an evidence o
growth in Mortification upon thoſe two grounds; Firſt
A Chriſtian that is much a victor in this bleſſed warfare
Is oft-times under the dreadful impreſſions of the Majeſt
and Holineſs of God, by which thoſe ſinful ſtirrings an
motions of his heart are much abated; by reaſon of his te
our, he cannot endure himſelf to be *with the fool in th*
ends of the earth, becauſe ſuch a one hath power over hi
ſpirit and rules over it, ſo that he is not like a city broke
down and without Walls, O! but it is much for one, t
ſubject all his thoughts to the obedience of *Jeſus Chriſt*
to have nothing within him that lifts up the heel againſt th
knowledge and excellency of *Jeſus Chriſt*: and by the way
It is a woful and irrational evil, that we lodge Chriſt i
our face, and in our mouth, we ſpeak of him, and ſee
to love him, but we lodge idols in our heart, that glor
ous and excellent Manſion, which ſhould be kept for th
excellent gueſt, that *immortal King of glory*, who is th
light of the higher Houſe.

There is this third evidence of growth to be much i
exalting and magnifying of *Jeſus Chriſt*, and lifting up
that burdenſome ſtone of his praiſe; this was an evidenc
of *Pauls* growth in Mortification, *Rom.* 7. 25. 1 *Cor.* 15. 56
57, 58. O! but one that hath really taſted of that nob
thing, mortifying and pardoning grace, their ſoul wi
eſteem *Chriſt* matchleſs, and a divine neceſſity of ſpeakin

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ut his praiſe and ſetting him on high, will lye upon them. There are two ſpecial times, when Chriſtians are put to a divine *non plus* in ſpeaking out his praiſe, and are conſtrained to cry out that word, *Pſal.* 65. 1. *Praiſe waiteth for thee*, (or is ſilent) that is, it cannot be expreſſed. There is that time, when a Chriſtian is caught up, as it were unto the third Heavens, and hath ſome eminent diſcoveries of God, then they are conſtrained to cry out, *exalt thy ſelf, O Lord*; their thoughts are ſo high of him, that there can be no expreſſions found ſuitable unto his worth; And we confeſs indeed, it is hard, if not impoſſible, to commit any hyperbole in commending of him. And there is that ſecond time, when Chriſtians are able to turn the battle to the gate, and in ſome meaſure are enabled to conquer their ſpiritual Enemies; Then are they put to this, who can exalt him who is by infinit degrees exalted above our bleſſing and praiſe? Sometimes a Chriſtian is put to that ſpiritual poſture and heavenly frame, that he cannot make language of his thoughts of *Chriſt*, that though his heart could indite a good matter concerning the King, yet his tongue cannot be the pen of a ready writer.

There is a fourth evidence of a Chriſtians growth, when a Chriſtian hath more ſpiritual diſcoveries; and inſight unto his corruptions, and is more wreſtling againſt them: and we would have you conſidering theſe two things: 1. That diſcovery of boſome and inviſible luſts, is that which we mainly take to be meant in this evidence, and wreſtling againſt them; and there is this ſecondly, that all our victories over our luſts, ſhould increaſe our antipathy againſt ſin, and make us to be zealous till once we ſhall obtain a compleat victory, and ſhall have accompliſhed our warfare.

There is a fifth evidence of our growth, when the remembrance of our former Luſts and Idols, do not provoke deſires, after the enjoyment of thoſe things again, but rather doth provoke the exerciſe of ſorrows that ever that ſhould have been our lot, to have been under the dominion of ſuch Luſts and Idols: O! but there are many, to whom remembrance of their Luſts will provoke their affections, *Ezek.* 23. 19. al. and this ſpeaks much ſtrength

of love, that the picture of his Idol, ſhould ſo much inflame him, and gain his affections; O! but looking upon our old ſins with an affectionat eye, ſpeaks little growth in mortification.

There is this laſt evidence of our growth, our high and majeſtick thoughts of Chriſt and his Word, for if once our humours be purged out, we ſhall then *as new born babes, deſire the ſincere milk of the word*, and I am perſwaded, that as one doth obtain ſucceſs in this precious warfare, he doth aſcend in his ſpiritual conception of *Chriſt*; ſuch an one is endeavouring that evangelick and heavenly captivity of affections, to have them all confined unto *Jeſus Chriſt*, that precious and excellent object: O! but one ſight of *Jeſus Chriſt*, in his matchleſs and tranſcendent comlineſs, to behold that divine contemperature, harmony and conjunction of all ſpiritual graces that are in him, would it not provoke us to caſt away our Idols to the Moles and to the Batts, and ſhould not they loſs their beautiful hue and Image? *O*! but eternaly to contemplat that infinit majeſty that is in him, ſweetly contemperat with his lowlineſs, ſo that we may ſay, there is both Majeſtick lowlineſs, and lowly Majeſty in him, to ſee likewayes his Infinite highneſs, and his matchleſs condeſcendency, to ſee his abſolute Soveraignity, and his unparaleld humility, thoſe things, if once they were attained, might make us cry out, *who would not love thee, O King of Nations.*

Now that which we ſhall laſtly ſpeak to, ſhall be this, to ſhow unto you thoſe things that ſpeak and prove our Soul-Union, and Heart-conjunction with our Idols, that ſo we may be provoked to the mortification of them; There is this firſt, that we imbrace our Idols after frequent convictions of the diſadvantages of them, that after they have been ſeen in their own native collours, yet we dandle them upon our knee, like that word, *Iſa.* 57. 10. and that, *Jer.* 50. 38. *They are mad upon their Idols*, demented in their purſuits after them; and no doubt this ſpeaks a moſt unmortified frame, and one filled with the love of his Idols. There is this ſecondly, that ſpeak it, our imbracing of our Idols upon ſmall Tentations, like

that,

that, 2 *Sam.* 12. 2, 3. there are ſome Tentations of our Luſts, to gain our affections, and ſome to gain our judgment, and to ſin without the propoſal of ſome great advantage, or ſome ſolacing delight or pleaſure, ſpeaks us moſt ſtrongly united to our luſts. There is this thirdly, that ſpeaks that infinite toyl and labour that we expoſe our ſelves to, to ſatisfie our Luſts; you will ſee it, *Eccleſ.* 2. where *Solomon* making pleaſure and carnal joy his Idol, is put to much toyl to ſatisfie it: and believe it, it is more eaſie to mortifie your luſts, than to ſatisfie them, for that is impoſſible work: our Idols have two daughters that ſtill cry, *Give, Give*: our Idols are like the grave, the barran womb, the earth that is not filled with water, and the fire, who never cry, *It is enough*: our Idols have two attendants, *Impatience* and *Diligence*; we will weary our ſelves in the fire, to obtain ſatisfaction to our luſts, and if we do not attain it, we will curſe our King, and look upward. There is this Fourthly, that ſpeaks our Soul-union to our Idols, and it is imbracing of them, after application of threatnings, againſt thoſe who ſhould imbrace that ſin; and yet, to commit this ſin with lifted up hand, is indeed, to ſport with the juſtice of God, or rather to put a Bil of defiance in his hand, ſuppoſing that we are above the reach of his juſtice and power. And there is this Fifthly, That ſpeaks it, our killing of convictions, which tend to the diſcovery of the ſinfulneſs of ſin, and preſſing upon us thoſe duties, by which we attain to the *Mortification* of them: and is it not certain, that we kill our convictions in the birth, and makes them to prove abortive? Love to our Idols is that which kills our convictions & killing of our convictions, is the mother of our love to our Idols: And there is this, Laſtly, that ſpeaks our Soul-union with our Idols; thoſe anxious ſorrows when we miſs the enjoyment of our Idols, we are then ready to cry out, *It is better for me to die then to live*: and often-times, when our Idols are taken from us, and are laid in the grave, our living luſts ſit down, and lament over the grave of our buried Idols, crying forth. *Ah, my Lord*, And ſince there are ſuch inviſible, and woful knots of union betwixt us and our Idols, we ſhould endeavour to have all theſe knots looſed, and to

have

have our Soul united unto him, by those two precious and golden chains of *Faith* and *Love*. and to have our heart a *Bethel*, a house for God, and a Temple for the Holy Ghost; and not a *Bethaven*, a house of Idols, and a cage for all unclean birds, that our spirits may be mansions for that *eternal Spirit*, and he may have an arbitrary power over us, and a negative voice in conducting us to heaven.

SERMON. III.

Gal. 5. 24. *And they that are Christs have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.*

MOrtification is that precious duty imposed upon man, not only by the Law of Nature, but by the royal and excellent Law of Grace. Doth not the law and light of nature instruct man thus, it is better to kill then to be killed; and certainly, except a Christian be the ruine of his iniquities, iniquity shall certainly be his ruine; we shall either sing a song of triumph over our lusts, or our lusts shall sing a song of triumph over us; and doth not that royal law of liberty and grace enforce this upon us, while it desireth, that we should *crucifie our members, which are upon the earth*, and be aspiring after a divine conformity with the Image of the invisible God; Though we conceive, there be some, that if they would retire themselves a little to behold those subtile and invisible actings of the mystery of iniquity within them, and those deep devices of Satan, and how many strange Lords, beside *Jesus Christ*, exercise dominion over them; they might be constrained to put in their *Amen* unto that truth, that *it is more easie for a camel to pass thorow the eye of a needle, then for such unmortified Christians:* as many of us are, *to enter into the kingdom of God.* It is better for us to dwell in the house of mourning, then in the house of mirth, and we may say of much of the carnal joy that is amongst us, *Such laughter is mad, and such mirth what doth it?* we may wish for some retired cottage in the wilderness, where we may go aside, and spend our seven-

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ty years in the bitterneſs of our ſoul, and account it marvelous loving kindneſs, if we ſhall obtain hope in our end: It is without all debate, that the general and univerſal evil of our dayes is, that Chriſtians are ſo little in the exerciſe of this precious grace of Mortification; we think, we take a greater latitude in our way to heaven, than that cloud of witneſſes which went before us, did adventure to take: and it is certain, that if one from the dead were admitted to write Comentars upon the diſadvantages of ſatisfying the luſts of the Fleſh, they would point forth marvelous hurt, and infinit loſſe in exerciſing any of thoſe; as likewayes, if any from above were admitted to write upon the advantages *of crucifying the fleſh with the affections and luſts thereof*, what precious commendation might they give to thoſe that are exerciſed in thoſe low, but exalting works of Mortification? Believe me, this is moſt certain, that it is eaſier to mortifie your luſts, than to ſatisfie them: for we conceive, that ſuch an one who is ſpending his precious time in the ſatisfying of his luſts: doth ſpend his time betwixt theſe three, the impatiency of his luſts, which ſtill cry forth, *give, give*; the impotency and weakneſs of the means he hath to ſatisfie ſuch luſts, and the conviction of the impoſſibility of ſatisfying the inſaciable deſires, and infinit luſts of ſin: anxiety and ſorrow are the conſtant attendants of a man that is not ſtudying to crucifie his luſts and affections: and certainly, if we may allude to that word, *Jer.* 48. 10 *Curſed be he that keepeth back his ſword from blood*, he is curſed, that doth not endeavour to crucifie, and bring low the *ſeven abbominations of his heart*, that we may with *Naphtali* and *Zebulon*, jeopard our lives unto death in the high places of the field, & that there might be none of our luſts to cry forth within us, *the bitterneſs of death is paſt*, but may endeavour to cut them in pieces before the Lord. We conceive, this work of Mortification, is the moſt pleaſant exerciſe of a Chriſtian, if not in its own nature, yet in its fruits and effects.

Now before we ſhall ſpeak any thing unto thoſe things which we propoſed to ſpeak of at the laſt occaſion, we ſhal ſpeak a little to this, what is the reaſon that Chriſtians

reſolutions

resolutions and purposes to quite such a predominant lust, and to forsake such an Idol, do oft-times evanish without any fruit? All these cords of divine resolution by which they bind themselves, are but as tow and flax before the fire of temptation, they decreeing many things which are not established: And we confesse, this is so incident an evill unto his own. that sometimes they are resolved in nothing so much as this, to resolve no more; they in a manner give over the duty of resolution, because they are so short coming in the duty of performance: And we conceive that this is occasioned either through this, that Christians do not resolve upon the strength of a Mediator, or if they do resolve upon his strength, they are not much in the improvement of it for the bringing low of such an iniquity. And we conceive, this was the ground that *Peter's* resolutions were brought so much low, and were blasted; and this is somewhat pointed at, *Isa.* 40. 30, 31. Where it is said, *even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall*; the greatest natural abilities which might help men to run and not be weary, and the most promising evidences from themselves, shall fail and be blasted; but (as it is in the 31. *v.*) *they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength*, even those who are denyed to their own strength. And we conceive, that there are these two great mysteries of Christianity, first, to resolve so as being convinced of this, that we are not able, as of our selves, to think one good thought: And secondly, which is a little more mysterious, to believe that *Christs* strength laid hold on by Faith, is as effectual for the crucifying such a lust, as if it were our own proper strength and excellency: certainly, one that hath once swallowed this camel of Christianity, needs not strain at the lower gnat of it: we would only say this by the way, study to flee comparative resolutions, for ordinarily these are much blasted, as was clear in *Peter*, *though all shall forsake thee, yet I will not*: study to be positive in your resolutions, but beware of comparisons.

This is likewayes occasioned through this, that ordinarily they determine the mortifying of such a lust rather with their light than with their affections; as it is sometimes

times the exercise of a Christian, when he goeth to prayer, for the mortifying of such a lust, his light prayeth more than his affections: and sometimes it falls out, that when light and judgment is praying for the mortifying of such an Idol, affection, as it were, entereth a protestation against the granting of such a desire, and in a manner saith, *Lord mortifie not such a lust.* This we conceive was the case and practice of those who are made mention of, *Ezek.* 14. 4, 5. Who came to enquire of the Lord, having their Idols in their heart: we may put our Idols from our minde, but have our Idols in our heart, when we come to seek the mortification of them; and we would only say this unto you when ye begin to resolve, study to have your souls under a divine impression of the sinfulness of such a lust, as likewayes under the infinite disadvantage of following such a lust: we conceive, that the ordinary time of a Christians resolution is, when they are blessed with the dew of heaven, and are admitted to taste of his sweetness; And oftimes Christians resolutions are rather according to their present frame, than according to that which probably will be their frame ere long: And this is the occasion that Christians who are big in their resolutions, are often short and defective in their performances; or else we conceive it to be occasioned through Christians being too much given to sloathfulness, and that wofull Idol of self-indulgency, they resolve fair, but do not take pains to accomplish their vows; This is clearly pointed at, not only *Prov.* 13, 4. where it is said, *The sluggard desireth, but he hath nothing:* but more clearly, *Prov.* 21. 25. *The desire of the sluggard slayeth him,* and the reason is subjoyned, *because his hands refuse to labour*: It is most certain, that except a Christian be diligent, he can never be a mortifying Christian; Mortification is not attained with ease, we must travel in pain, and have the pangs of the new-birth before *Christ be formed in us.*

And there is this lastly, which doth occasion it, Christians do not propose to themselves a sublime and divine end in mortifying of their lusts; and certainly we conceive, this is the most ordinary and incident case unto his own, we either propose this end in mortifying of our lusts, that

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we may have ſomewhat whereof to glory, and to make mention of our righteouſs, *even of ours only*; or elſe we propoſe this carnal end, of ſtudying to have a name continuully amongſt the living in *Jeruſalem.* leſt that inward myſtery of iniquity that is within us be engraven on our foreheads; and I think certainly, that name may be engraven upon many profeſſors in this age which *Jude* giveth them, ver 12. of his Epiſtle, he calleth them *twiſe dead*, that is, not only dead in reality, but that through the deceitfulneſs of ſin, they had even loſt any name of living they likewayes had. ſo that it was alſo evanithed and gone away. I am perſwaded, that were we known each one to another, as we are known to him, *who hath thoſe ſeven eyes that run too and fro through the earth*, no doubt, we ſhould wonder at the boldneſs of our hope: and laugh at the ſtrength of our deluſions.

Now that which firſt we propoſed to ſpeak of from the words was this. the advantage which a Chriſtian hath by the mortifying of his luſts, and being continually exerciſed in this precious warfare; and (as we cleared at the laſt occaſion) the advantage of a Mortifying Chriſtian was this, ordinarily ſuch a Chriſtian doth live under the impreſſion of his intereſt in *God*, he is admitted to read his name writen in the book of life: now this is clear from *Rev.* 2. 17. where he ſaith, *to him that overcometh*, who is in the way of overcoming, *will I give a white ſtone. and in the ſtone a new name written, which no man knoweth ſaving he that receiveth it*: as likewayes from *Rev.* 2. 11. *he that overcometh ſhall not be hurt of the ſecond death*: as alſo from 2. *Tim.* 4, 8. where theſe two are ſweetly conjoyned and linked together: and it muſt certainly be ſo, that a mortifying Chriſtian is one that liveth under the divine impreſſion of his intereſt in *God*. not only becauſe of this, that one who is not mortifying his luſts. as it were, doth darken his hope and obſcure his evidence, every day's intermiſſion of mortification, being (as it were) a ſcore drawn through the extract of our peace with God, ſo that in proceſſe of time that precious extract of peace becometh illegible unto us, and we ſhall ſay thi, that a Chriſtian who can keep the faith of his intereſt, without the exercis

ercise of Mortification, may suspect the reality of such assurance: mortification and assurance die and live together, are weak and strong together: But likewayes it must be so, because of this, that ordinarily *God* rewardeth a mortifying Christian with the intimation of his peace, he takes them in unto the eternal purposes of his heart, and the secrets of his counsel, and lets him see his name written in the records of heaven, lest he should faint in the day of adversity, and so prove his strength to be but small: did ye never know what such a thing as this meant, that when ye were most serious in the exercise of Mortification, ye were admitted to behold that precious and everlasting hope? There is this second advantage that a Christian hath by being continually exercised in this blessed warfare, and it is this: Mortification is that grace which keeps all the graces of the spirit in action and exercise; it is that superior wheel, at the motion of which, all the inferiour wheels do move; and if we may so speak, Mortification is this, its all the graces of the spirit combined in one, and exercising themselves in on divine act; *Faith* is exercised by a Mortifying Christian, not only in this, in drawing furniture from *Jesus Christ* who is our head, but likewayes, in that it is that defensive peice of armour, (it being called *the shield of* Faith) by which we quench the fiery darts of the Devil: this war will not proceed with much advantage, if faith be out of the field: So also the grace of *hope* is exercised by a Mortifying Christian, for this is its exercise in this blessed warfare, to hold up the crown of immortal glory in its right hand, with this motto engraven upon it, *he that persevereth to the end shall be saved & obtain this crown of life*, which is the great encouragement of a Christian in this exercise: Likewayes the grace of *watchfulness* is exercised in this blessed warfare: for watchfulness (if so we may speak) is the centinel of the Christian, that standeth upon the watch tower, and giveth warning unto a Christian of the motions of his adversary; watchfulness warneth us when first corruption begins to stir: So the grace of love is much exercised in this blessed warfare; for a Christian where he beholds that divine and unsearchable compassion of *Jesus Christ* which he exercises towards

towards it, in upholding it under its straits, that when the Archers shoot at him, and do grievously wound him, that yet his bow should abide in its strength, this makes the grace of love to burn and live within a Christian, and lastly, the grace of *Prayer* is much exercised in this blessed Warfare, for when faith begins to die, and hope begins to losse its Courage, when watchfulnesse begins to sleep and love begins to be remisse, and to wax cold, then prayer as a flying Cherub, doth go to the Captain of our Salvation and desireth that he might help them in the day of their need: prayer is the sweet correspondent of the Christian betwixt heaven and earth: *prayer* stayeth upon the Mount with *Christ*, when *faith* & *watchfulnes* are in the field with our corruptions and lusts that are in us, & we may only say this by the way, I know not whether a Christian be more obliged to *Jesus Christ* for justification than for sanctification; but we conceive it is better to conjoyn these together, than to compare them one with another.

There is this third advantage that a Mortifying Christian hath, such a Christian doth most ordinarily meet with most divine solace and intimate communion and fellowship with *God*; such a Christian is admitted to taste of the honey out of the rock, and to be satisfied with the fine of the wheat. Would ye know the reason why you have not been in heaven these many dayes? it is this, ye have not been fighting these many dayes. Now this is clear from *Rev.* 2. 17. where that promise is given to the mortifying Christian, that *he shall taste of the hidden manna* which is the sweetnesse of *Jesus Christ*: as likewise, *Rom.* 8. 13. *If ye through the Spirit mortifie the deeds of the flesh, ye shall live*: as also *Rom.* 7. 24. compared with 25. where wrestling *Paul* doth receive songs of everlasting praise put in his mouth: would ye know the person that is admitted to sing on of the Songs of *Zion*, while he is in a strange land? it is the Mortifying Christian: for when he is in the pursuit of his enemies, he is then admitted to put out his finger, and taste of the honey, that his eyes may be enlightened. There is a mortification that is pleaded for by many in these dayes, whose highest advancement in this precious grace doth not consist in the

which it is, in knowing and being convinced of, and mourning over sin, but this is their Mortification, that one should be dead to the sense and conviction of sin: We shall passe no other verdict upon such Antinomian Mortification as this, but only this, it is indeed the Mortification of Godlinesse, it is a Crucifying of repentance and holinesse, it is a killing of the new man within a Christian, as likewise a quickening of the old-man in its lusts and affections: this Mortification is no other thing but Satan transformed in an angel of light, and this is a piece of that new Gospel which is so much preached in these dayes, which if an angel should bring from heaven, we ought not to believe it: this is no new light, but old darknesse covered over with the vail of a glistering light. O! study to be much under the impression of the bitternesse of sin, that so ye may taste of the consolations of the *Holy Ghost*.

There is this fourth advantage, that a Christian hath by being continually exercised in this warfare, which is, that such a Christian hath distinct and perfect discoveries, not only of the deceitfulnesse of his own heart; but also of the subtilty of corruption and sin that doth assault him: a mortifying Christian is a most experienced Christian: this is clear all along, *Rom.* 7. where wrestling *Paul* hath so distinct discoveries of himself, as he saith, there being a law in his members rebelling against the law of his minde, and bringing him into subjection. And certainly, there is much precious advantage that redounds unto the Christian by being convinced of the deceitfulnesse of his own heart, and of that mystery of iniquity that is within him, for such a Christian doth attain to the exercise of the grace of humility; for when he beholdeth himself as in a glass, he cryeth forth, *woe is me, I am undone*: I think it is in some sense lawfull for Christians to practice much of *Peters* divinity, which he had, *Luk.* 5. 8. *Depart from me, for I am a sinfull man*; not that it was well argued by him, but it spake forth the high apprehensions he had of the holinesse of God, and the low apprehensions he had of himself: as likewise, such a Christian is much denyed to his own strength, and so is necessitate to go unto one, on whom his strength is laid,

as

as likewayes such a Christian is much in the exercise of the grace of watchfulness; he is not ignorant of the devices of Satan, which make him to stand continually upon his guard, lest he be overtaken with the snare of the devil.

There is this fifth advantage that a Christian hath by being much in the exercise of mortification, he doth attain to much divine conformity with God, and is made a partaker of the divine nature, of that invisible Majesty: this is clear from *Rev.* 3. 5. where that promise, *I will cloath him in white*, is in a part accomplished to a Christian even while he is in this valley of tears. And certainly, this is the compend and sweet epitome of all Christian advantages, to be made like unto the Majesty of God; and it is not conformity unto him for a day, but such a mortifying Christian is most constant in keeping the divine lineaments, & spiritual characters of that precious Image undefaced in him, as it is promised, *Rev.* 3. 12. *Him that overcometh, I will make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out*: And certainly that promise of stability, is in a part accomplished to a Christian, even while he is here below: what could a Christian desire more then this, to be admitted to partake of the image of the Invisible God, and to be made like unto him?

There is this last advantage that a Christian hath by being continually exercised in this precious work of mortification, such an one hath his antipathy & hatred against sin much increased: would you know the Christian that liveth under the impression of the sinfulness of sin? it is the mortifying Christian. I think that vain distinction which Papists have, of mortal and venial sins, Christians in their practice do much allow and commend; there are some sins seems venial to them, which to commit and exercise, they take a latitude to themselves, as may be clear in this. a Christian will without much difficulty, if he be not tender, commit such things as are not consistent with the exercise of grace within him; he needs no other toleration but this, to have this made out to him that there is a consistency betwixt such a lust, and the living and spiritual nature of grace within him: but, no doubt, if we argued right, we should be provoked to desist from sin, even from the disadvantages that attend the pursuing after any lust. Now

Now that which we ſhall ſpeak to next, ſhall be this, what diſadvantages a Chriſtian hath by an intetruption of this ſpiritual warfare; and not being much taken up in the exerciſe of Mortification. If this queſtion were propoſed to many, when they did laſt ſet ſome hours apart to mortifie their ſins? the moſt part ſhould be put to a *non plus*, not knowing the laſt time when they were exerciſed in this precious warefare. And I would only ſay this, a Chriſtian that can interrupt the work of Mortification for ſome weeks together, may either ſuſpect that grace is groaning within him, with the groanings of a deadly wounded man, or elſe that he is not at all begotten unto a lively hope, there is no forloſſe nor diſcharge in this warfare, but we muſt fight till once the one foot be within that place of everlaſting delight.

There is this ſecond diſadvantage that attendeth a Chriſtian who interrupteth this warfare, ordinarily ſuch a one doth contract much hardneſs and impenitency of heart; this was clear in the practice of *David*; who when once he intermitted this war, could write a letter to the killing of godly *Uriah*, and no mention of ſmiting of heart, This is certainly a conſtant attendant of one who is not mortifying himſelf, he maketh his heart *die as a ſtone within him*: the mortifying Chriſtian keeps this holy Zeal within him, *he hateth the garments ſpotted with the fleſh*: would ye read the original and rife of hardneſs of heart in theſe dayes amongſt us? it is this Chriſtians are not much in the exercife of mortification; And I believe the Goſpel hath been preached figh ſix thouſand years; and it is much to be debated, if ver misbelief, and hardneſs of heart were ſo univerſal diſeaſes among Chriſtians as in theſe dayes: we think to win o heaven by gueſs, which maketh us ſo little intend this leſſed work.

There is this third diſadvantage, that a Chriſtian meets ith, by the intermiſſion of this warfare, and it isthis, that rdinarily ſuch a Chriſtian hath his luſts moſt reigning nd living within him: Sin will gather more ſtrength, by he interruption of one dayes exerciſe of Mortification, han ye can prevail over, by wreſtling with it many dayes: his is that ſubtil dexterity of ſin, It can recruit it ſelf in

few

few hours with much ease; and certainly, If ye be not constant in this warfare, it is like ye will not sing many songs of triumph over your lusts: he must be constant in this fight, who would be a triumpher in the fight: how long is it since ye set up an *Ebenezer* to God, saying, *hither to hath he helped me?* and when did he set up trophies and monuments of your victory? We think the Christians of this age, leave fewest and least trophies of their victory in the way to heaven, as ever any that went before them.

There is this fourth disadvantage which a Christian hath by the intermission of this warfare, and it is this, that ordinarily such a Christian liveth without fight or return, and overcoming at the last: A Christian who interrupteth the exercise of mortification, fighteth as we speak with a doubtful war, not having determined whether the fight shall be in his favour or not; there is somewhat of this pointed out in 1. *Tim.* 4, 8, where *Paul* fighting in an agony, as the word importeth, perswadeth himself that he shall have that crown of righteousness, which is the suitable reward of a conquering Christian: and believe me, I know not what shall afford a Christian, more Christian peace and consolation than this, to believe, that *he shall put all enemies under his feet, and make them his foot stool.*

There is this fifth disadvantage, that a Christian interrupting the exercise of mortification hath, and it is this, that ordinarily such a one, when he is passing thorow the first and second gates of death, and when he is to render up an account of his stewardship, hath least perswasion of his interest in God, Would ye know the reason why Christians die with so little faith of evidence? it is this, they have not been much in the exercise of mortification, certainly the conviction of short-coming in this duty, and the apprehension of eternity and of approaching judgment are two sweet companions together: I think, next to Justification and Faith in *Jesus Christ*, which is in the hinge of all our consolation, a Christian hath most peace in the *work* of Mortification; in the day when he shall be standing upon that outmost line betwixt time and eternity. O what consolation had old *Paul*, when he spake these words when he was ready to be dissolved, *I have fought the good*

ght of faith; I doubt much if ever *Paul* ſang a ſong of praiſe upon a higher key, than when he ſung that ſong, 2. *Tim.* 4. 8. *I have fought the good fight of faith*: *Pauls* heart was half tranſported, when he did reflect upon this, that all his luſts were dying and killed at his feet.

And there is this laſt diſadvantage that attends a Chriſtian, who interrupts this warfare. that ordinarily ſuch a one is much blaſted of God, in the exerciſe of other graces, yea more, he is blaſted in the exerciſe of gifts; theſe two loſſes will attend a Chriſtian who interrupts this warfare: and certainly, if a Chriſtian be blaſted in grace, and be not blaſted in gifts; it is one of the ſoreſt ſtroaks that can befall him; for ordinarily, it is a pillow ſewed under our arm holls, which maketh us purſue ſin without fear: this is ſecretly hinted at, *Eccleſ.* 2. 9. where that which made *Solomon* rove after his Idols, was this, *Alſo my wiſdom remained with me*: he was as wiſe a man now, as he was before. And certainly, when gifts are vigorous, and graces lor, they may ſit down and lament over themſelves *ſeven nights and ſeven dayes.*

Now we ſhall ſhut up our diſcourſe at this time: we ſhall only ſpeak a little to this, what may be ſpoken for conſolation to thoſe who are ſomewhat ſerious in accompliſhing this warfare, and yet have not ſenſible advantage, nor ſucceſs over their luſts, who have been toiling all night, and yet have catched nothing; And we conceive, that God doth ordinarily propoſe to a tender Chriſtian theſe three divine ends. by carving out to them ſuch a lot, firſt that he may be kept in a conſtant correſpondence with the Throne of grace; he, in a manner, wounds us in our leg, that we may not wander much abroad from his Throne: and certainly, Chriſtians may be convinced of this, that if they had their will in Mortifying, they would not be much in correſponding; which may be demonſtrat unto you thus, becauſe that which provoketh one to converſe with God, is rather a principle of neceſſity, than a principle of love: a Chriſtian will go ſix times to prayer, yea many times, from a principle of neceſſity, before he go twiſe from a principle of love and delight. Secondly, That the Chriſtians faith may be put to tryals and exerciſed, whether or not we will believe and reſt upon

upon him, notwithſtanding that we ſee not Mortificatio growing within us: we confeſs, our little advancement in Mortification, is the foundation of unbelief: and certainly to his own, God hath this deſign, even the trial of their grace, whether or not they will believe and *hope against hope*. Thirdly, The Lord doth it, becauſe he knoweth that a Chriſtian can better improve his little advancement in mortification than he can improve his great ſucceſs; believe me it is certain, that in a Chriſtians advancement in grace. it is more difficulty to bear it, then to bear his little advancement and progreſs in grace; and the great reaſon and occaſion of it is, becauſe ordinarily pride and arrogancy do bloſſom and ſpring off this precious root of grace for what doth decreaſe to a Chriſtian of the luſt of the eye and of the fleſh, ſeems to accreaſe to the pride of life; ſo as the one ſeemeth to go down, the other doth aſcend and go up. And to you who never knew what this exerciſe of Prayer and Mortification meant, (are there not many here who never knew what it was to have any change in their life?) We would only propoſe this unto you, did ye never know what it was to be under the impreſſion of the filthineſs of ſin? or, did you ever know what it was to water your couch with tears, under the impreſſion of it? like that word, *Pſal.* 32. 3. where *David* ſaith, *When I kept ſilence, my bones waxed old; through my roaring all the day long.* That word *roaring* ſpeaks forth not only this, that ſometimes a Chriſtian doth rather mourn as a beaſt, than complain as a man, (*roaring* being the voice of a beaſt) but likewayes ſpeaks forth this, that ſometimes Chriſtians are under ſuch an exerciſe, that the open field is a more proper place for them, then the ſecret retirements of their moſt quiet chambers. *David* was forced to roar as a beaſt, when the bones which are the pillars of his houſe, were waxing old and mouldering within him: certainly the day is coming, when ye who never knew what it was to crucifie a Lord *Chriſt* ſhall crucifie you upon that croſs of everlaſting pain when he ſhall tread you in the wine-preſs of the indignation of the moſt High, when he ſhall make the arrows of his Indignation ſharp upon you; ye who will not quite ſin; ſhall once be your eternal companion: and when Chriſt

ath been inviting you ſo often to quite ſuch luſts, and ye eturn ſo often an negative anſwer to him, this will be the ntence, which ſhall be paſt upon you, *Be it unto you, even s you will, they are joyned to Idols, let them alone*; and cerainly, when Chriſt ceaſeth to be a reprover, that man is n a ſad and deſperate eſtate. O! that ye might once fight his good fight of faith: your ſcent doth remain with many of you; are there not many here who never knew what t was to ſpend an hour in ſecret wreſtling and debating with their luſts? The ſtrong man keeps the houſe, and ſo ll is at peace with them, there is no going out, nor coming in at the gates of their city, but peace is, as it were, exciters of that houſe, and thoſe bear ſway within it. O! urſed be that peace which ſhall end in everlaſting war i h God. Would ye know the exerciſe and caſe of thoſe ho are in everlaſting chains? We can repreſent it under nothing ſo fit as this, it is infinit juſtice and infinit omnipotency, wreſtling and cruſhing finit and ſinful man; ometimes the peſtil of divine wrath coming down upon one part of his body, and at onother time upon another; hey are now living an endleſs life of death, and are ſpending their dayes in a dying life, they ſhall be eternally dying, nd yet never able to die. Are there not ſome of you, who re ſo joyned to your Idols, that if *Dives* ſhould come from ell and preach this text to you, *Crucifie your luſts*, ye would op your ears at that precious exhortation. Ye may hide n under your tongue, but be perſwaded, that at laſt it hall be in your belly as the poiſon of Aſps, and as the veome of Dragons. And we would leave this advice and onnſel upon Chriſtians, who have begun this precious warare, *ſtand faſt to the liberty wherewith Chriſt hath made you ree, and be not entangled again into that yoke of bondage.* his is a yoke that neither we nor our fathers were able to ear; and we deſire you to meditate upon this advice, ſtuy to be as much in mortification, and in the exerciſe of his duty, as if ye were to obtain ſalvation by works, but withall, ſtudy to be as much denied unto thoſe things, and o have as low an eſteem of your ſelves, as if ye were ound to do nothing, or had done nothing at all. ſtudy to ork as one that is a legaliſt indeed, and one who deſire

to maintain good works; but study self-denial. as one th
hath fled for refuge unto that blessed hope that is set befo
you; *Christ* is standing at the end of the walk of a Mortif
ing Christian, with a crown in his right hand, and he d
fireth us to persevere unto the end; that we may obt
that immortal *crown* one day with precious *Christ*, shall
an infinite recompense of all our toil; and the more ex
cise of Mortification you are put to, heaven will be mo
sweet and delightsome unto you.

SERMON IV.

Gal. 5. 24. *And they that are Christs have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.*

SUch is that universal stupidity and hardness of heart th
hath overtaken the professors of this generation, that
Christ should come from heaven & read over unto us the co
plete roll of our iniquities, & show unto us these records
which all our wandrings are written, the most part of
would not be much affected, nor much in the exercise
sorrow. No doubt, it is easier for a camel to pass thro
the eye of a needle, than for stupid Christians, such as
are, to enter into the Kingdom of *God*. It is one of the m
steries of his overcoming grace, that he hath not brok
these two precious staffes of beauty and bands amongst
that he hath not broken the covenant of his peace, and ce
ed to entertain in so near a relation betwixt himself a
us. As likewayes, it is a mystery of his love, that we a
not made eternal monuments of the justice of *God*, and t
Motto engraven upon us, *behold these that made not G
their refuge*. *God* is glorious in the exercise of all his ho
attributes, but in none more, than in the exercise of
patience and long-suffering toward us; and in a man
he darkeneth the glory of the justice, and casteth a vail
ver his spotless holiness, that the exercise of the attrib
of patience and long-suffering, may be rendered more c
spicuous. I only pose you with this question, is not m
tification a mystery unto your practice? Can such a de
sion as this overtake you, that ye shall reign with *Chri*
thou

ough your lusts reign with you as long as ye are here? It certain ye know, that mortification is that precious ercise in which ye ought to be taken up: and I conceive, at there is only this difference betwixt sinning against ght, and that unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost, at the sinning against Light, is a sinning against the com-on work of the spirit upon your understanding, but the n against the Holy Ghost, is a sin against the *common* work the spirit upon the affections: and no doubt, there is a ear bordering betwixt these two, it is the first step to it, y which ye go up and ascend unto the acting of this sin. It s a faithfull saying (saith the Apostle *Paul*) that *if we die with Christ, we shall also reign with him*; and we may like-wayes say, it is a faithfull saying, that if we be not with rist, and be not conformed unto him in his suffering we nnot be conformed unto him. In the power of his resur-ction, ye are all willing to take *Christ* as a *Justifier* and as *Saviour*, but unwilling to take him as a *Sanctifier* and as *Prince*: but know this, that the gifts of this spotless Lamb, re so sweetly linked together, that they were like his own at that was upon his body, which was without seam that uld not be divided: and so except the whole gifts of *Je-Christ* fall unto us by divine lot, we can have no part r portion therein: This Mortification is the compend of ristianity; and certainly, a Christian reading these words, may stand amazed and be ashamed at his own stupidi-that interest in *Christ* should be connected with such a gree of Mortification, though we conceive, there be many o take to themselves the name of Christians, that never ew what it was to exercise themselves in Mortification. I shall only (before I speak to that which mainly we end to speak to) press this grace of Mortification on you by these things. First, This may enforce this y of Mortification of lusts, because it is impossible for e to satisfie their lusts, let them accomplish never so di-ent a search to find satisfaction to them; therefore ye uld be undeceiv'd and convinced of that delusion, ye ceive that if your lusts had their desire, they would be fied, but that is most clearly held forth to be false, l. 28. 29, 30, where it is said of their lusts, *they got*

their hearts desire, and the word that is subjoyned, *yet were they not estranged from their lusts*. Let a covetous man suppose this with himself, that upon the having of so many thousands in the world, his lust of covetousnes would be satisfied, but *Job* doth refuse this, chap. 20 22. saying, *in the fulnes of his sufficiency, he shall be in straits*. It is easier to mortifie your lusts, then to satisfie them: And this secondly we would say, that though ye hide sin under your tongue, and though it be sweet unto you, yet know that the day is approaching when it shall be in your bowels as the gall of Aspes, and as the poyson of Dragons: know this for a certainty, that the momentary pleasures of sin which they afford unto you, are not worthy to be compared with that eternal weight of unsupportable misery that shall be inflicted upon you. O! but it is a terrible sight to behold *a living God* entring eternally in the lists with a poor sinfull sinner, to have omnipotency & Justice fighting against the dust of his feet, There is this lastly which we would say, not exercising your selves constantly in this precious work of Mortification, doth interrupt much precious fellowship that you might have with *Christ*; ye that are tasting of the sweetnes of sin, cannot taste of the sweetnes of heaven: this is clear, *Rom.* 8. 13. where mortifiers have that Promise, that *they shall live*. And I shall only say this by the way, we conceive it to be a question that is difficult to determine, whether it be more for the advantage of one that is under any predominant lust, to have the objects upon which it feeds withdrawn, or to have them furnished to feed upon: as for instance, if one be under the woful predominant of pride, it is a question whether the want of occasion to exercise and feed that lust, be better, or to have it; proud *Achitophel*, when he wanted the objects upon which pride doth feed, he will go and strangle himself; and when we have them furnished unto us, what secret Idolatry, what desperat Atheism do we commit in the secret temples of our heart, and in the chambers of our Imagery? Mortifie more, or ye shall pray less.

Now that which we intend mainly to speak to, is that second thing which we proposed concerning Mortification from these words, and it was the extent of Mortification

t they did not only crucifie their predominat lusts; which
e here called *affections*, because they are Idols, and these
e linked together by that passion of love, but likewayes
ey ought to mortifie the first motions and stirrings of cor-
ption, and all occasions to it, which are here called
sts: but moreover, one that is a spritual mortifier, must
ortifie original sin, which is here called *the flesh*, as ofe-
mes it hath that name in Scripture, an exercise which is
known to many, if not unto all: we think original sin
t a *Zoar*, and it is hard indeed, to be convinced of the
ofulnes or original sin, and to take it up in its native col-
urs. Now in speaking upon the work of Mortification
original sin, we shall not insist long upon this, that it is
e duty of a Christian to be exercised in the crucifying of
is sin, it is clear from, *Col.* 3. 5 where we are commanded to
ortifie *our members*; and it is clear from the practice of
aul Rom. 7. 24. *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me
om this body of death?* there is a strong Emphasis in the word
, as if *Paul* would have said, If infinit grace can have
unds, then no doubt, sin'ul *Paul* is the bounds fixed to it.
We shall for more clear speaking to this, first, speak a
le unto this what is original sin; and we conceive, that
stands in these, original sin is the imputation of that trans-
ression of *Adam* unto us; for he being a common and
presentative person, we fell into his falling, and did
nd in his standing, but likewayes original sin doth com-
chend this, want of original righteousnes, man not be-
g created after that noble pattern and divine Idea, *the I-
ge of God*; man now carrieth but *the Image of God* in
s wisdom and in his omnipotency, but while he was in
primitive estate, he did carry an impression of the ho-
nes of *God*: as likewayes original sin doth comprehend
s, a proneness to the committing of all evil, as also an
ptitude and unfitness for the doing of any good, and this
hat which we are all by nature. The first part of original
is clear from *Rom.* 5. 12. and 14. verses. And the rest may be
thered from many places of Scripture, but is comprehen-
d in that one word. *Eph.* 2. 1. *We were dead in sins
d trespasses*: one can no more move in the acting of any
ritual good, than if he were one altogether without life.
We shall secondly speak a little to those advantages that

a Christian may have, by being convinced of original sin
It is most certain, that a Christian is less convinced of o
riginal corruption, than he is of any actual transgressio
almost that doth befal him; and (as we were speaking)
the reason of it doth proceed partly from this, that a Chri
stian taketh not up the sinfulness of original sin, though
be a sin having more in it, than is in twenty, yea an hu
dred actual transgressions: or else it proceedeth from th
that Christians are not convinced what influence origin
sin hath upon all the outward actings of iniquity; It is th
fruitful womb that doth alwayes bear twins, and is nev
barren; it is that root that doth dayly bring forth wor
wood and gall: or else it doth proceed from this, that
think that original sin is not our own, and that we are n
so guilty, as if indeed we had eaten this cursed Apple.

But as to the advantages of being convinced of origi
corruption, we conceive that there is this first advanta
That it is impossible for any to have high thoughts of *Je*
Christs love, and of the offer of mercy, except he be co
vinced of original sin: Would ye know the reason w
Christ hath so small an esteem among you? it is becaus
this, ye are not convinced of your original corruption
this is somewhat pointed at *Rom.* 5; 6, 7, 8. ver
where the Apostle heightneth the love of *Christ* in dy
for us, he pitches upon this to commend it, our origi
corruption, that *we were sinners and without strength.*
what a mystery is the condescending grace of *Christ* un
sinner believing original corruption; it is as it were,
foundation upon which all our esteem doth arise & (pri
there is somewhat of this likewayes pointed at *Rom*
24. compared with ver 25. where *Paul* beggionning
commend free grace, his song doth arise to the highest k
because he hath been convinced of *this body of death*
dwelleth within him, I would only say this, if you wo
learn this divine lesson of putting a high accompt u
Christ, study original corruption much.

There is this second advantage that a Christian hath f
the conviction of it, and it is this, it doth exceedi
commend the omnipotency of his grace in mortifying
ruption, when ye are convinced of this sin: when wa

at *Paul* had the higheſt accompt of the omnipotency of e grace of *Chriſt*? was it not when he was forced to cry rth, *O! wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from is body of death*: And this is certainly pointed at, *Eph.* 1. where the quickening vertue of grace, is Commend from this, the object upon which it is exerciſed, *ye at were dead in ſins and treſpaſſes.*

There is this third advantage, that flowеth from convict- n of original ſin, and it is this. It is a compendious way keep the Chriſtian under the exerciſe of humility, under e higheſt attainments of Mortification, or under the high- ſt attainments of communion and fellowſhip with God. Would ye know the reaſon why we are ſo eaſily puffed up nder ſome ſmal ſucceſs, or ſome ſmal familiarity with *Chriſt*? is want of reflect thoughts upon original corruption that within us: Therefore I would preſcribe this to Chriſti- s under their higheſt advancement by grace, to ſit down nd ſeriouſly reflect upon that which they are by nature, *at their father is an Amorite, and their Mother an Hittite*, nd the rock from whence they are hewn, may preach hu- ility to them; this is clear, *Rom.* 7. 24. where *Paul* un- r the conviction of original ſin, calleth himſelf a *wretch- man*, and is clear alſo from the 9. verſ. of that Chapter, here when once original ſin is diſcovered. *he died* in his wn apprehenſions: if we were in the apprehenſion of is more, the wind of the wilderneſs would not bind us p in her wings, till our ſubſtance were diſſolv'd.

There is a fourth advantage a Chriſtian hath from the nviction of original corruption, and it is this, it keep- h the Chriſtian under the deepeſt impreſſion of the ſin- fulneſs of ſin. I confeſs, that is one of the greateſt my- ries of Chriſtianity, to have our ſoul conſtantly under e impreſſion of the ſinfulneſs of ſin, which we conceive, impoſſible to be attained without ſolid conviction of o- iginal corruption: this is ſomewhat hinted at *Rom.* 7. 13. hen *Paul* once by the Commandment, having original ſin covered, ſin became unto him *exceeding ſinfull*: and the aſon why original ſin diſcovered, hath ſuch influence u- on this, is becauſe ordinarily we conceive, that the ac- gs of ſin do not proceed from our ſelves, but from *that deceiver*

deceiver of the brethren, which *James* doth abundantly refute, for when a man is tempted, *he is entised by his lust*.

There is this fifth advantage that a Christian hath by being convinced of original sin; it is an excellent way to keep the Christian under a most watchful and fearing frame: such language would not been heard out of an *Hagars* mouth *Am I a dog to commit this*; If he had been convinced of original sin; but because he was a stranger to this, his presumption led him above that which was indeed within him: therefore, when one is convinced of their proneness to all iniquity, of their want of that conformity with God, they remember to stand upon their watch-tower lest they be ensnared: this is most clearly pointed at 1. *Cor.* 9. last, when *Paul* is put to this exercise, *I bear down my body, and bring it into subjection*; and the reason is subjoyned, because he was possessed with a holy jealousie of himself, and entertained a divine suspicion, which was consistent with the acting of hope. I know nothing to make a Christian watch over his own heart so much as this; to see that spawn of iniquity which is within him, to behold that fruitful mother of iniquity which never was declared barren, and never shall be, till sin shall be no more within his own.

There is this sixth advantage a Christian hath, by being convinced of original corruption; It is that which will keep the soul under the highest estimation of *Christ*, and will make the grace of love to burn most vigorously within a Christian. O but when one shal reflect upon these two, the spotless *holiness of Christ*, that absolute purity of that precious Lamb, and shall again descend to reflect upon these mysteries of iniquity which are within himself, it is no wonder that sometimes he be put to use *Peters* divinity, to cry forth, *Depart from me, for I am a sinfull man*; but when he improveth this sight most fully, his case is, to have his soul transported and as it were, in a holy extasie of love, toward that precious and matchless One.

And there is this last advantage that a Christian hath by being convinced of original sin, it is that which putteth a Christian to a holy diffidence in his own strength, and maketh him to be much in the employment of the strength of him whose name is *Jehovah*. What is the reason that Christia

Christians commit a breach of that first Command; so much trusting to their own strength, and not making mention of *his righteousness*, and laying hold upon *his strength, even upon his only*? It is this, because we do not dwell under the constant impression of original corruption. We conceive it is as great a mystery to mens judgement, as it is a mystery to their practice, to mortifie it. What made *Paul* so much to cry forth, *Rom.* 7. 18. to disclaim his own ability, and *vers* 23. was it not the conviction of original sin which was within him?

Now, that which we shall secondly speak unto, shall be this, to presse a little upon you the necessity of the mortification of original sin: and we conceive these things point out its necessity; first, this, That all mortification is in vain, and as the beating of the air, untill once original corruption be mortified: What is all your mortification without this? it is, as it were, the lopping off the branches, while the root doth remain intire, it is a daming up of the streams, while the fountain is still runnning; and no doubt, that mortification will easily grow vain: you must once mortifie this which is the mother of sin. And we would only say this by the way, that under correction, we conceive, that original sin is not, nor cannot well be mortified in the body, but only is to be mortified in the members; that is we must study to mortifie such a part of original sin, to mortifie some living lusts, which are within us, and to be groaning under the rest; for we conceive, it is hard to take up the whole body of original sin, and to make that the subject of mortification, or to lament over it.

There is this secondly, which speaks forth the necessity of Mortification of original sin, it is that which is an undeniable evidence of a Christian; to be taken up in the mortifying of this sin; for we conceive it to be impossible for a hypocrite to attain to such a length, as to study the real mortification of original corruption: It was the practice of these two holy men, the Apostle *Paul* Rom. 7. 24. and of *David*, Psal. 51. 5. where they sit down to lament over the iniquity which was within them. And the reason why the mortification of original sin, is an undeniable

character and evidence of a Christian, is not only from this that one that setteth about the mortification of original sin, is a Christian that hath most distinct discoveries of himself, as like wayes some discoveries of the holinesse and spotlesnesse of God. It is hard to be convinced of original sin by the light of nature, if at all, for to us it is a question, if he can be, which the Apostle seemeth to intimate, *Rom.* 7. 7. Saying, I *had not known lust, except the Law had said, Thou shalt not covet.*

There is this, thirdly, which speaks forth the necessity of the mortification of original corruption, that all the duties that proceed from a Christian, are exceeding defiled and polluted, except he endeavour the mortification of this sin: for this was a paradox to the Apostle *James*, chap. 3, 11. *That a fountain at one place shall send forth bitter water and sweet:* and till the fountain of corruption be removed, it is probably to be conceived, that all the actings of duty by us shall be exceedingly polluted. O! but when original sin lyes without the streak of a Christians mortification, his duties will not ascend with acceptance upon his Altar.

And there is this fourthly which pleads the necessity of the Mortification of original sin, that it is that sin which doth exceedingly war against the grace of God in a Christian: Would you know why grace is in such a languishing, estate? it is because of the power of original sin. We conceive this, that he opposition of original sin to the advancement of grace, is more invisible and the oppositon of actual corruption unto the actings of grace, is more visible and obvious; but certainly that which doth intangle a Christian in his walk, & maketh him not to ascend as pillars of smoak from this present wildernesse, is *that original sin*; this is clear from *Rom.* 7 23. and *Gal.* 5. 17. Where *the spirit warreth against the flesh, and the flesh against the spirit, and these two are contrary one to another.*

Now that which thirdly, we shall speak upon the mortification of original sin, shall be this, what is the way how a Christian may be convinced and brought unto the spiritual impression of original sin? And certainly we conceive, that if a Christian shall exercise himself in these three, he may attain to some spiritual convictions of this sin

ſin. First, let him be much in the exercise of ſelf examination, and when he ſhall reflect upon himſelf, he will behold the inviſible motions of iniquity unto every ſin that hath been named among the Gentiles: who is ſo great a ſtranger unto his own heart, but if he will reflect upon it, may ſometimes ſee the ſtirrings of unknown (almoſt) corruptions? which ſpeaketh that aloud to the Chriſtian, that there is a fountain and ſpring within him, that would ſend forth ſuch bitter waters, except they were graciouſly reſtrained.

There is this ſecondly, by which a Chriſtian may be brought to the conviction of original ſin, and it is, to be much in the exerciſe of the ſtudy of the ſpirituality of the law, which was the way that *Paul* attained to the conviction of original ſin, *Rom.* 7. It is that compendious cut, by which one may behold that holineſs of *God* who impoſeth a command not only to deſiſt from the actings of ſin, but to deſiſt alſo from the firſt motions and inſts of ſin.

There is this laſtly, a Chriſtian would be much in the exerciſe of prayer, for that ſpirit who convinceth the world of ſin, that what you do not know as of your ſelves, he who is the great convincer of the world, may imprint thoſe convictions upon your ſouls, which may make you ſit down and bewail your ſelves, in the bitterneſs of your ſpirit. And we ſhall at this time ſhut up our diſcourſe; only we would ſay to theſe who are entertaining this holy warfare againſt their corruptions, that they would not be much diſcouraged, though they ſee not ſenſible victory; you muſt know that ſin muſt be with you while you have a being: we may certainly allude unto that word, *Dan.* 7. 12. and may ſay, that the dominion of your ſins ſhall be taken away, though their lives ſhall be prolonged for a time and for a ſeaſon. As likeways we would ſay this for your encouragment, who have your corruptions ſtirring moſt within you, that ordinarily Satan when he is in the way to remove, then ſtirreth and acteth moſt, as it is obſerved, that the laſt beating of the pulſe in a dying man is moſt ſtrong, ſo the beating of corruption, when it is going to be caſt out, may be moſt violent. And we ſhall only give the reaſon, why Chriſtians are not much affected

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with this, that the day is coming when once they ſhall prevail over their corruptions, and ſhall trade Satan under their feet; why the feet of thoſe who bring ſuch glad tydings are not beautiful upon the mountains? And we conceive that it doth either proceed from this, that Chriſtians are not ſeriouſly engaged in this holy warfare, for that is moſt certain, that if you were fighting day by day, then the hope of victory, and of a bleſſed iſſue would be as glad tydings from a far countrey, and ſhould be as cold water unto a thirſty ſoul, that though your hope were deferred untill your hearts were ſick, yet the accompliſhment of your deſires ſhould be ſweet to your ſouls: or elſe it doth proceed from this, that Chriſtians do not believe this truth that there is an iſſue and period of their fight; if once you could be brought this length to ſeal this truth, that that victory ſhall be once heard in heaven, *Speak comfortably to Jeruſalem, for her warfare is accompliſhed*, if we may allude unto theſe words; or if a Chriſtian be ſeriouſly debating with his luſts, and hath alſo the faith of this truth in ſome meaſure, then it doth proceed laſtly from this want of the deſtinct perſwaſions of our intereſt, and want of the aſſurance of our peace with him; for as long as a Chriſtian is under debate concerning his eternal reſt, he cannot be much affected with joy, under the declaration of theſe means, that their is a period of their fight, and that they who have *been made partakers of the firſt reſurrection, over them the ſecond death ſhall have no power*. O what a bleſſed day ſuppoſe ye ſhall that be, when your feet ſhall ſtand within the gate of the new Jeruſalem, when you ſhall receive theſe two precious badges and eternal trophies of your victory, *a Crown put upon your head*, of infinit more value than all material crowns, and *a palm put in your hand*. We conceive, it is impoſſible to determine, what joy will accrue to a Chriſtian upon the reflect thoughts of this, that he hath trode Satan under his feet, and hath bruiſed the head of him, who hath ſo oft bruiſed his heel: And as for thoſe who are ſtrangers (as the moſt part of us are) unto this ſpiritual warfare, be convinced of this, that within threeſcore and fewer years God ſhall enter into an eternal warfare with you, where there ſhall be no ceſſation of

arms

arms, neither shall there be any interruption. It is better to fight with your lusts, than to fight with *a living and eternal God*, when he shall declare himself to be your opposite and enemy. Man once was made perfect, but he did find out many inventions, and amongst all those inventions he found that accursed one, how there might be a separation betwixt him and the *living God*; and except-*He* whose name is *Prudence*, and hath found out the knowledge of many witty inventions had found out that precious invention of reconciling sinners unto God. we should have been *Magor Missabib*, terrours to our selves. O! that you might be perswaded once to contend with your lusts, that ye may endure the heat of the day, and the cold of the night, in wrestling against sin; know this, that *sin goeth not out, but by fasting and prayer*; It is so straitly united unto us. It is easier for a camel to pass thorow the eye of a needle, than for many of us to mortifie our corruptions. We shall shut up all that we would say in this one word, be perswaded of this, that the day is aproaching and near at hand, when our *blessed Lord Jesus* shall come with ten thousands of his Saints: what if this were the day? O unmortified sinners!) that ye should behold that white Throne fixed in the clouds, and ye should have a summons given into your hands without continuation of days, to appear before his Tribunal: What could ye answer when ye are reproved? Would not silence and confession be your best defence? Certainly there is an eternal curse to be pronounced against those who do not exercise themselves unto this precious act of Godlinesse, of *crucifying the flesh with the lusts and affections thereof*. There is a law of death over your head, and there is a law of sin, which is within your hearts, and ye shall be eternally subjects unto these two Laws, except *the Law of the spirit of life do make you free.*

SER.

SERMON, V.

Gal. 5. 24, *And they that are Christs have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.*

THe walk of a Christian, who hath *Christ* in him *the hope of glory*, is most sublime, and it being from spiritual principals, for spiritual ends, is also according to a spiritual rule. The walk of a Christian is from *faith* and *love in Jesus Christ*, as that predominant principle; nay more, from the spirit of *Christ*, living in the soul of a Christian by faith, and dwelling in it by love, which is that *primum mobile*, and first wheel of all its motions; as likewise, it is for a spiritual end, it being *for the glory of God*, and to subordinate unto this, their own salvation and advantage. they are not like *Ephraim empty vines bringing forth fruit unto themselves*, but it is their design to make *Christ all*, and themselves nothing, though it be natural unto a man to *deifie* himself, and to make himself the first *Alpha* of his actings, and the last *Omega* of all his performances: as likewise. It is according to a spiritual rule, it being conformed unto that precious *word of life*, which is perfect in it self, and leadeth man unto perfection. But this is a lamentation, and shall be for a lamentation, that we love to take such a liberty to our selves, and such a latitude in our way and walk to heaven, There is much fear and complaint amongst many, for the losse of their civil liberties, and that they are detained captives in their own land by the hand of strangers, but there is a captivity and bondage that is lesse lamented, and yet more intolerable, and that is. The bondage of *sin and iniquity*, that though we should expire and spend seventy years (which is one of the utmost lines of our life) under this captivity, yet we should not cry forth, *Return our captivity, as the rivers of the south.* Are there not many amongst us, who ly with as much contentment under the bonds af their sin, and fetters of their iniquity. as if they were chains of Gold, and ornaments of fine gold? Mortification is a mystery unto

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our practice: That which was a paradox to *Saul*, that *a man should find his enemy and yet keep him alive*, that paradox is often commited in these dayes, when we do not study to crucifie the lusts and affections of our hearts. I think, Christians in these days, when they reflect upon those unmortified corruptions that are within them, must be constrained to cry forth, that all their hope doth consist in this *that a living dog is better then a dead lyon*, and that their confidence is terminate upon this, that yet they are within this side of eternity. We love singularity in opinion, but hate singularity in practice, though the one, no doubt, is much more commendable than the other. May we not wish for two moneths, wherein we may go unto the mountains and bewail our virginity, that we have not been espoused unto that precious and excellent one *Jesus Christ*, and that we have not been endeavouring to conform our selves unto his blessed and precious image? We confesse this may be a mystery to many every day, that they are not eternal monuments of the justice & indignation of *God*, and that somewhat of *Cains* divinity doth not possesse our hearts, that *whosoever shall find us shall kill us.* We would only say this, that ye would be as much in the exercise of the mortification of your invisible lusts, as ye are in the exercise of the mortification of your visible lusts and iniquities.

At the last occasion that we spoke upon these words, we told you that the second thing that was held forth concerning Mortification, was the extent of it, that a Christian ought to mortifie not only original corruption, but also his predominant lusts, and the first motions and occasions unto sin. Concerning the mortification of Original sin, we have spoken somewhat, and shall insist no further: only we would say this, that we laid down this as a conclusion, that original sin could not be mortified in its body, but only was to be mortified in its members, and the ground of this assertion we conceived to be this, because it is impossible for a Christian to take up original sin in its body, as is clear from *Jer.* 17 9. where it is said, *that the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperatly wicked; who can know it?* It is above the reach of any

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man to fathom and comprehend the deceitfulneſſe of his own heart. It is a myſtery that was never unfolded, and as long as we are within time, cannot be unfolded. We would only ſay this, that a Chriſtian who is convinced of original ſin, that there is the ſpawn and ſeed of every imaginable corruption within him, will be much in the magnifying of reſtraining grace, and will ſit down, and pen a ſong of Praiſe unto the unſearchable grace of *Chriſt*, who hath redeemed them. I confeſſe, that which makes Chriſtians have ſo much to do with pardoning grace, which was *Davids* practice, 1 *Sam.* 25. 32. We may call original ſin *God*, for after it cometh forth a *Troup*, *chorus vitiorum*, a troup of vices; it is that fruitful womb that doth always bear *Twins*. And we conceive, that Chriſtians who are ſo called, ought to be much in the ſtudy of original ſin. It is a wonder, that we walk with ſuch wofal contentment to heaven, and to that imagined happineſſe which we ſuppoſe to have: can ſuch a deluſion as this overtake you, that you can *reap in joy*, who never did *ſow in tears*, and that you can return, bringing *sheaves in your boſome*, who never went forth bearing *precious ſeed*? we think to climb to heaven by that ſhort ladder of preſumption: I would ſay it, and wiſh that you may conſider it, we are affraid that there ſhall be many woful and ſad diſappointments of many of our hopes, and we ſhall be conſtrained to reject our confidence: we ſeparate thoſe things which *God* hath conjoyned, we either purſue for holineſſe without juſtification or elſe we purſue for juſtification without holineſſe.

Now in ſpeaking upon the mortification of predominant luſts, which are here called *affections*, becauſe the ſpirit of a Chriſtian, and of any, are moſt ſtrongly united unto theſe, we ſhall not inſiſt to prove this unto you; that it is the duty of a Chriſtian, or of any, to mortifie their predominant luſts, it is clear from *Matth.* 18. 8, 9. Where we are commanded *to pluck out our right eye, if it offend us*, the meaning of which is this, that if we had a luſt as dear to us as our right eye, if it hurt and offend us, we ſhould pluck it out, and from *Mark.* 9. 45. and 47. and from *Col.* 3. 5. where we are commanded to *mortifie our inordinat affections*. Neither ſhall we inſiſt much upon this diſtinctio-

distinction of predominant lusts, that there are some predominant lusts, which are more pure and refined, which ordinarily passe under the notion and vail of vertue; as pride, when it is mixed with prudence in its actings, passeth under the vail of generosity, and highness of spirit and prodigality when it is not sensual and brutish, passeth under the notion of mortification to the world; and Satan in tempting people to the acting of these predominant lusts, doth not only study to gain the affections, but likewise studieth to gain our light and our judement unto the acting of these things: There are some predominant lusts which are more grosse; the sinfulness of which is more easily discerned, and Satan in temping people to the acting of these lusts, studieth mainly to gain the affection which in so far gaineth the judgment, as it sets about to devise and meditate upon the way, how such predominant lusts may be effectuat and accomplished. O! but the mind of man will plot subtil iniquity, and the affection and heart will execute the plottings of the mind, with greatest carefulness and sedulity.

Now that which first we shall speak upon the work of mortification of predominant lusts, shall be this, what are these disadvantages that a Christian hath by not studying to mortifie and crucifie his predominant lusts, but giving way and concession to them to live.

The first disadvantage we conceive to be this, that a Christian who is not much in the Mortification of his predominant lusts, doth hinder much of that precious fellowship and divine familiarity which should be betwixt God and him; the giving way to the King of our lusts to live, separats friends, and that word is true, *that a brother offended is harder to be won, than the bars of a strong Castle* Now this is clear from *Ezek.* 14. 5. where it is said, *They are estranged from me by their idols:* as likewise *ver*, 7. of that chapter, *every one that separateth himself whether of Israel or of a stranger, and setteth up Idols in his heart.* Separation from God, and that woful Idolatry, are two inseparable companions: as likewise, it is clear from *Ezek*, 44. 10. where these are conjoyned again; and *Isa*, 59. 2. *Your iniquities have separated betwixt you and me.* And I would

would only say this, that a Christian who can to his apprehension find some sweetness and enjoyment of *God*, without the exercise of mortification, may question much the reality of his enjoyment: And it is certain, that the entertaining of predominant lusts, doth exceedingly interrupt communion and fellowship with *God*, not only because of this, that predominant lusts, when they are in exercise, do exceedingly weaken a Christian in diligence, and in his zeal and fervency in going about these duties by which Communion with *God* is attained: Some folks predominant lusts have gotten such advantage over them, that they will almost cease to pray without conviction, or if they be convinced, their convictions will suddenly evanish: but also because of this, that when a predominant lust is in its vigorous exercise, then a Christian loseth much of the impression of the sweetness of communion and fellowship with *Christ*. O! but *Christ* might live long in heaven, ere we give him a visit; we think we could be happy without him, and that is but an imaginary delusion of our lying lusts.

There is this second disadvantage that a Christian hath by not studying to crucifie his predominant lusts, and it is this, that such a Christian doth not receive any return of prayer, and God doth deny to him the answer of his desires. This is clear from *Ezek.* 20. 31. where he saith, *Do ye pollute your selves with your Idols, and come and enquire at me? As I live, saith the Lord, I will not be enquired of by you.* And this was the divinity of that blind man, *John* 9. 31. *God heareth not sinners*: And it was the divinity of *David*, Ps. 66. *If I regard iniquity in my heart, God will not hear my prayer*, and most clearly, *Is.* 59. 2. where their iniquities doth cause him deny to hear their sutes. O! but there are many Inhibitions served in heaven against the professors of this generation, that they should pray and not be heard, and should cry and yet not have access: And certainly is is no wonder, that such prayers as we present unto God, while our predominant lusts are in exercise, be not heard; we pray to God with such indifferency and formality, as in a manner, we turn over our prayers unto a complement to salute God with, in the morning, and to take our farewell of him at night; we know not much more use of

many

many of our prayers, and hence it is that he denyeth to us the answer of them. I would only speak this to you, let Christians hearts first speak the words which they are to speak in prayer, and then let their words speak their heart, that their heart may endite that which is the matter of their desires,

There is this third disadvantage that a Christian hath by entertaining his predominant lusts, and it is this. It doth exceedingly interrupt a Christians motion unto heaven: how far have you gone these many dayes, or these many years? the motion of Christians is retrograde in these dayes, they go backward, but do not go on from strength to strength. O! that we might give obedience to that command, which is, *Heb.* 2. 4, *Let us lay aside every weight and sin that doth beset us, and run with patience the race that is set before us*; more Mortification would make more motion towards heaven then we do attain to.

There is this fourth disadvantage that a Christian hath by entertaining his predominant lusts, and it is this, that when predominant lust is not mortified then any corruption that is within you, will easily be discovered in the day of trial; the *Lord* oft times taketh that revenge upon many, that because they would not mortifie at home, he will write their iniquities in legible letters upon their foreheads, that those that run may read them: and if Christians believed this more, that God may be provoked to write your lusts that are not mortified, in capital letters upon your forehead, it might provoke you more to be in this exercise: This is clear, *Ezek.* 16. 36. compared with 37. ver. where their entertaining of their Idols, is threatned with this curse, *that he will discover their nakedness, and make the shame thereof to appear.*

There is this fifth disadvantage that a Christian hath by it, and it is this; that in the day, when he shall be passing thorow the valley of the shadow of death, and shall be looking long and endless eternity in the face then a predominant lust unmortified will be ill company, and will raise a storm within the conscience, which will not easily be appeased. There are not many of us fit for eternity, neither do we live as though we were daily to die. If you would walk with peace thorow the first and second gates of death,

study

ſtudy, the Mortification of your luſts: O! but at the ſing-ing of that triumphant ſong? *O death where is thy ſting? and O grave where in thy victory?* ſhall not the ſoul be fraughted with divine conſolation and unſpeakable joy?

There is this laſt diſadvantage that waits upon the Chriſtian, and it is this, that ſuch a one doth exceedingly mar all the performances which he goeth about, and (as it were) leaveth a print of his hands upon theſe moſt holy and excellent duties. A Chriſtian who hath a predominant luſt, and is not ſtudying to mortifie it, his gifts prayes more than his grace: as likewayes, he is more in ſeeking the approbation of men, than the praiſe of *God*: A Chriſtian that doth not ſtudy to mortifie his luſts, he is more in ſeeking the ornaments of Chriſtianity, than the Subſtance of it: I think, the vitals and eſſentials of Chriſtianity are much exhauſted and ſpent. and there are ſome few bones left, rather the picture and anatomy of a Chriſtian, then realy ſuch a one; As likewayes there is this, one who doth not ſtudy to mortifie his predominant luſts, he will not make Conſcience of obeying the commandment of faith; And this likewayes waits on him, much hardneſs and impenitency of heart. O! but oft times through the deceitfulneſs of ſin, our heart becometh as a ſtone within us, and we are delivered unto the hands of our iniquities.

Now that which ſecondly, we ſhall ſpeak to, upon the Mortification of predominant luſts, ſhall be this, what is that profound ſubtilty and deſperate deceitfulneſs that Satan uſeth in tempting people to the acting of their predominant luſts: we have ſix thouſand years experience, that he is a lyar, and a murtherer from the beginning though we believe the flatteries of ſin, as though our iniquities were of good report and of known integrity that never did deceive: and we conceive, that Satans ſubtilty doth appear in theſe, firſt, his ſubtilty doth appear in this, that ordinarily when a Chriſtian, or any is in a moſt ſecure and preſumptous frame, then Satan Acts and tempts a Chriſtian to the acting of his predominant luſt, when *Chriſt* is away, than he doth aſſail; this is moſt clearly pointed at *Luk.* 22, 31, compared with 33 verſ: where *Chriſt* ſaith to *Peter*, *Satan hath deſired to ſift thee as wheat*; and if ye will read the 33 verſ. ye will behold *Peters* frame, that he

he was in a high string of presumption, *though all men should forsake thee, yet I will not do it:* as likewise it is clear from 2, *Sam.* 11. 2, where when *David* was lying upon his bed, and walking upon the roof of his house, then is he tempted to the acting of the sin of uncleanness; Satan studieth to catch his advantage, especially at that time, when we are most prone to embrace, and most unapt to resist; therefore it should be a Christians endeavour to exercise watchfulness, and to stand upon his watch tower.

There is this secondly wherein his subtilty doth appear, that ordinarily he doth propose the imaginary advantage of imbracing of such a lust, and doth affect our affections with the pleasure of it, but doth not make mention of the disadvantage and infinit hurt, that doth appear and come from such a lust? this was clear in his first temptation with our first father, he makes mention of this, *If thou eat of the forbidden fruit, thou shalt be as God*, but no mention made of this, that he should be a *sinner*: and most clearly in *Matth.* 4. 8 where Satan showeth unto that holy and spotless one, *all the Kingdoms of the world, with the glory of them*, and these things he promised to give *Christ*, and shewed him the glory of the Kingdoms of the world; but did not shew to him, the vexation and toil of these Kingdoms; and no doubt, the one is much more then the other: The hook wherewith he studieth to take us, is varnished over with the bait of imaginary dignity, with transient pleasures, and with passing vanities. O! that we were wise as serpents, to know the depths of Satan, that we might not be ensnared nor taken by entisements.

There is this thirdly wherein it appeareth, that ordinarily he studieth either to extenuate the sinfulness of sin, that a Christian may be brought to call this but a *Zoar*; or else he studieth to prove the consistency betwixt such a sin, and the reality of the grace of God: and when once a Christian, is brought to such a length, as to debate the reality of the grace of Gods consistency, with the acting of such a lust they are near a fall, for then they cry forth, *Master. pardon me when I shall bow my knee in the house of Rimmon, and when my Master leaneth upon my hand*: they then take an indulgence and a latitude to themselves, to commit that iniqhity.

There

There is this fourthly wherein his subtilty doth appear that oft times he will restrain the temptations to the acting of your predominant lusts, and withdraw the objects of them, that either you may be put off your watch, or which is more ordinary, that lusts may take life, when the object of lust is withdrawn: And that is most certain, that lust oft-times groweth most when there are fewest temptations to assail it, for upon the absence of our Idols, our love to these things doth increase; a lusting *Amnon* will wax lean every day, when he wants the object whereupon to feed.

There is this fifthly wherein his subtilty doth eminently appear, that ordinarily he will tempt people to the acting of these sins, that are introductive, and bring on the acting of their predominant lusts, he will tempt one that is given to uncleanness, to pride, idleness, fulness of bread: And certainly one who is given to the evil of pride, he will tempt him to the smaller actings of these sins, that so he may ascend by degrees: he will study to seize upon the out-forts of the soul, that so he may gain the affections: he will break the Covenant that we have made with our eyes, that so we may break the Covenant that we have made with our heart.

There is this lastly, wherein his subtilty doth appear, that ordinarily he will tempt people to the acting of their predominant lust under the vail of vertue, and things commendable, as he will tempt one to Covetousness upon this account, that they may be capacitate to be charitable to the poor, and may be useful to these who want in their generation: he will tempt one to sin, as is clear, *Rom.* 3. 6. that the grace of *Christ* may be more conspicuous in pardoning them. he tempted *Christ* to presumption under the vail of faith, as is clear *Matth.* 4. 6. *if thou be the Son of God, cast thy self down*, and the ground he giveth is, *For it is written, He shall give his Angels charge concerning thee, &c.* And likewise he tempts many to the acting of Misbelief, under the vail of humility, knowledge, and distinct apprehensions of God.

That which thirdly we shall speak to, shall be, to give you some evidences whether or not ye have attained unto the

the mortification of your predominant luſts, and whether indeed you have ſung a ſong of triumph over them, and having ſpoken ſomewhat of this before, we ſhall not inſiſt much upon it: only we would ſay theſe three things, 1. That a Chriſtian that can reflect upon luſts which he ſuppoſeth to be mortified with delight, and want of the exercise of grief, may ſuſpect the reality of his mortification. O! but one that can meditate upon his predominant luſt which he ſuppoſed was mortified, and yet not be conſtrained to cover himſelf with aſhes, and to put ſackcloth upon his loins, may cry forth, *Miſerere mei, have pity upon me.*

And there is this ſecond evidence that your predominant luſt is not mortified, when you are not ſedulous and careful to eſchew all things that lead unto the acting of that predominant ſin: If ye be not giving obedience unto that command, 1. *Theſ.* 5. 22. *Abſtain from all appearance of evil*, you may queſtion the reality of your Mortification. It is an excellent practice of a Chriſtian, to be as much under the impreſſion of the ſinfulneſs of predominant luſt and ſin, after it is mortified, and to be as much in purſuing it, as when it is in its vigorous exerciſe and life with you.

And there is this laſtly, which may evidence it, and it is, when one can upon ſuitable and convenient occaſions of acting ſuch a predominant ſin, have their luſt ſet on fire, and endeavour to act it, they may queſtion the reality of their Mortification. I know the great bond which reſtraineth many from the acting of their predominant luſt, is not the apprehenſion of the *holineſs of God*, but the want of ſecrecy: O! but if we had ſecrecy, we would not mourn much for *theſe* ſins which we commit in ſecret, neither would we be much in deſiſting from the acting of theſe things, unto which our luſt doth lead us. It was certainly a commendable practice of one, who being tempted unto the ſin of uncleanneſs, did condeſcend to ſatisfie the deſire of one that did purſue her, upon this condition, that he would bring her unto a place where nothing ſhould behold her; which he attempting to do, and bringing her to the moſt retired imaginable place, ſhe then moſt piouſly uttered forth theſe words *doth not God behold us?* which words

words had influence upon him to whom they were ſpoken, that he deſiſted from further proſecuting ſuch woful and carnal deſigns. O! but the apprehenſion of the omniſcience of God, would keep us much to the crucifying of our moſt predominant luſt.

We ſhall ſhut up our diſcourſe at this time, only we ſhall ſay a little unto thoſe who are guilty of that predominant luſt of *Covetouſneſs*, which we conceive is not only a predominant luſt, but an univerſal luſt: *Sin* is an univerſal *King* over the moſt abſolute Monarch and over every one that ſits upon the dunghill. And we conceive that *covetouſneſs* is one of *ſins* greateſt *Princes*, acting under this abſolute Monarch, and having manyeſt ſubjects, And we would only propoſe theſe things, by which you may be helped to mortifie ſuch a luſt and idol. O! meditate much upon the diſadvantages attending this idol of covetouſneſs we conceive the diſadvantages thereof are clearly pointed forth, 1 *Tim.* 6. 9. 10. where the Apoſtle *Paul* enumerateth four diſadvantages of that ſin of covetouſneſs. 1. That it is that which maketh *people err from the faith*, 2. *It drowneth them in deſtruction and perdition.* 3. *It is the root of all evil.* And laſtly, *it peirceth them through with many ſorrows.* And for thoſe *whoſe god is the world*, we would only propoſe this conſideration to them, which we conceive hath moſt influence upon ſuch, be perſwaded to this, that *covetouſneſs* will abbreviat and ſhorten your life as is clear, *Jam.* 5. 3. where this is one property of the *idol of covetouſneſs, that it ſhall eat up your fleſh as it were fire.* It is not an unſenſible cutting ſhort of your life, but moſt ſenſibly it will abbreviat, and bring you in the midſt of your days to your long and everlaſting home. And there is this diſadvantage of it alſo, that *covetouſneſs* is that ſin which doth moſt directly commit a breach of the firſt command, *Thou ſhalt have no other gods before me*, as is clear *Col.* 3. 5. where this ſin of covetouſneſs is called Idolatry *and covetouſneſs which is Idolatry.* And certainly, what are thoſe things that you purſue after, but white and yellow duſt and glittering clay? the excellency of which we conceive, doth conſiſt as much (in the eſtimation of men) in the rarity of theſe things, as in any intrinſical and

ernal worth and excellency: And how contemptible a thing riches and the world is, doth not this speak it, that when there is abundance of these things, they become contemptible? as is clear from that word, that *Solomon made Silver as Stones in the streets of Jerusalem*, which doth not only, speak out this, the abundance of these things in his days; but likeways it speaketh forth this, that abundance of these things maketh them contemptible, and moveth us to undervalue them; And that which *Solomon* hath, *Prov.* 23. 5. *Why setteſt thou thy heart on that which is not, for riches take to themselves wings and flee away*: e're long the world shall either leave you, or you shall leave the world.

Now we shall desire to shut up our discourse with this, that ye would seriously intend the mortification of your lusts, and that ye would be much in the imployment of the spirit of *Christ*: *Christ* hath killed the damning power of sin, and hath promised to us the Spirit of Mortification, by which we may kill the dominion of sin: And certainly, a Christian ought to act so in dependance upon the Spirit of *Christ*, as if they were meer patients and instruments under his hand: but withall we conceive, that in respect of activity and endeavours, a Christian ought to act so, as if he acted independently from him, and did act all himself; but withall in respect of self-denial, he ought so to act, as if he acted nothing at all, but the Spirit acted alone in him, and therefore should cry forth, after he hath done all, that *he is but an unprofitable servant*. O! that we would be perswaded seriously to ponder and ballance these things, that except ye be the ruine of your own iniquities, iniquity shall certainly be your ruine, and ye know not how long it is unto that day when that decree shall be past in heaven against you. *they are joyned to their Idols, let them alone.* I shall only say that word which *John* hath in his 1 Epistle, 5. last, *Little children, keep your selves from Idols.*

SERMON VI.

Gal. 5. 24. *And they that are Christs have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.*

IT is an unchangeable and unalterable decree of heave which cannot be repealed, *that the wages of sin is death* and *that which a man soweth, that shall he also reap*; Though we conceive, there are many that are possessed with thi imaginary delusion, *that though they adde drunkennesse t thirst*, and do daily taste of that forbidden fruit, yet at la they shall obtain a place to walk in, amongst those tha stand by: They conceive, that there is a possible uni on of pure Religion and undefiled, and the want o Mortification; though we think that religon without mor tification, is nothing else but the mortification of religion and *the Crucifying Christ afresh*. Are there not many here who instead of *travelling in birth, untill Christ be formed i them*, are travelling in birth, till they bring forth iniquity and till the Image of that old man be fully framed in them. Now there is this that we would have you know and with, that it were engraven upon the fleshy tables o your heart, as with a pen of iron, and the point of a dia mond, that there are two Tribunals, upon which *God* doth sit to judge: there is a Tribunal of justice where all the sentences past, are pure, unmixed wrath, without a temperament or mixture of mercy; And before this Tri bunal, all flesh must once appear, and receive that dreadf full sentence of eternal separation from the Majesty of th Lord, and if you do well, you must say *Amen* unto th equity of that sentence: but know this is for your consola tion, that this not his last word; know that that Justice Court is but subordinate, and there is another higher unto which we may appeal, to have that sentence Justice sweetly repealed, And is not this one mysterious depth of Infinite love, that *Grace* should declare the righteous, whom Justice hath condemned, and yet leave no imputation upon the Justice of God? that *love* should sweetly reduce decrees of Justice, and declare them law to to be void and null? this is the law of love. And

not this a myſtery of infinit love, that that which is an abomination for man, *to juſtifie the wicked*, ſhould be love and Juſtice in God, *to Juſtifie the ungodly?* And is not this a wonder, that though *there be no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Jeſus*, yet there ſhould be many things condemnable in them, and that divine love ſhould make ſuch an abſtraction, as to make a ſeparation betwixt any things that are condemnable, and condemnation? *Juſtice and judgment are the habitation of his throne*, yet *mercy and truth go before it*, and cometh neareſt ſinners, to make ready their way, that they may ſpeak with Juſtice. There is this that we would have you know, that in the compliſhment of this work of mortification, (of which we have been ſpeaking at many occaſions) a Chriſtian hath that ſame power communicable unto him for the overcoming of his temptations, which *Chriſt* had in the overcoming of principalities and powers: this is clear, *Eph.* 1. 20. And certainly, ſometimes when a Chriſtian doth reflect upon thoſe living and ſtrong corruptions that are within him, he will have much of that fear which *Eliſha's* ſervant had, who cryed out, *Maſter, what ſhall we do?* but if our eyes were opened, we ſhould ſee that there be more for us, nor againſt us, put on much of that divine generoſity of *Nehemiah* (if we may allude unto it in his combate of faith) *Should ſuch a one as I flee?* however, keep a midſt betwixt diſcouragment, and anxious unbelief: And I would only give Chriſtians who are inclined ingaged in this holy warfare, that counſel which *Ahab* gave to *Benhadad*, 1 *King.* 20. 11. *Let not him that girdeth on his armour boaſt as he that putteth it off*, let confident faith be mixed with holy fear, that there may be a ſweet mixture of theſe two. And there is this which we would ſpeak to you, that there is a difference betwixt the grant and gift of pardon, and the intimation of pardon unto a Chriſtian: yea, more, there is a difference betwixt the intimation of pardon, even for a ſin mortified and repented for, and the divine application of it: this is clear by comparing 2 *Sam.* 12. 13. with *Pſal.* 51. where *Nathan* ſaith to *David*, *thine iniquities are blotted out, and thy ſin is taken away*. There is both the grant of pardon

and the intimation of it, and yet he himself, *Pſal.* 51. prayeth for the application of pardon; pardon was not applied, though it was intimated: and this would ſpeak this to us, that we would not always conclude from the want of the ſenſible convictions of pardon, the want of the grant of pardon.

But now to come to that at which we left at the laſt occaſion, which was the extent of Mortification, that a Chriſtian ought not only to mortifie original ſin, but his predominant luſts alſo, with all the motions and occaſions unto the acting of theſe ſins, Concerning the mortification of original ſin, which is here called *the fleſh*, we have ſpoken already, and have ſpoken ſomewhat concerning the mortification of predominant luſts and preſumptuous ſins; It is turned now to be an improper expreſſion, to make mention of a predominant grace that ſhould ſtand in oppoſition to predominant luſts: I would only ſay this, that under the law, there is no expreſſe mention made for any ſacrifice for Preſumptuous ſins, unto which the *Apoſtle* doth allude, *Heb.* 10. 26. *If a man ſin wilfully after he hath received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more ſacrifice for ſin.* And certainly this may make us aſtoniſhed to entertain our predominant ſins, and our preſumptuous iniquities, to entertain them ſo, as not to debate and wreſtle with them, for they turn not into preſumptuous ſins, except we go ſuch a length: therefore we ſhould be much in preſenting that ſupplication *Pſal.* 19. 13. *Keep back thy ſervant from preſumptuous ſins, let them not have dominion over me.*

Now that which we ſhall ſpeak to firſt, ſhall be this, what are the moſt effectual and ſpiritual means, by which a Chriſtian may be helped to the mortifying of his predominant luſts? And before we ſpeak of them, we ſhall only ſay this, that this generation deſireth rather to know what to do, then to do and practiſe what they know: we think to win to heaven by knowledge; though we confeſs we will not win to heaven without it, yet there is more required in a Chriſtian.

The firſt way how a Chriſtian will be helped to mortify his predominant luſts, is this, for a Chriſtian to be much

e exercise of secret prayer. And I would say this, he is a
essed Christian who ever won to the mortification of the least
rength of a lust by publick prayer, whether more publick, or
families, or with societies, pride and self-seeking, so is that
terpillar and worm that eats up the fruit of these addres-
unto *God*; but if you were much in secret prayer
one, it would be a compendious way to attain to the
ortification of your lusts, that when a Messenger of Sa-
n buffets you, ye may go to the Throne thrice and be-
ech the *Lord*, that this evil may depart from you, this is
ear, not only, *Eph.* 6. 18. where amongst all the rest of
e spiritual armour of a Christian, prayer is made men-
on of; *Pray with prayer and all manner of supplication*: it
clear, *Jam.* 5. 17. *If any man be afflicted, let him pray*,
d, 2. *Cor.* 12. 7, 8. the words that we were speaking
st now. *O!* whether is that *washing of our bed with tears*,
d that presenting of supplications *with sighs and groans*
at cannot be expressed now gone? There are few Christians;
t can make language of their grief, whose grief of heart
es never to such a length, as they may cry forth, *I am*
troubled that I cannot speak. He were indeed a Phœnix
his time, who could without lying to the *Holy Ghost*, say,
at his bones were waxing old through his roaring all the
y; and we would only say to such, that are not endeavour-
g after this, you shall go down to your graves, having
ur bones full of the sins of your youth.

There is this second mean that we would speak to, that
Christian would be much in the exercise of the grace of
atchfulness; This is clear from *Luk.* 21. near the close,
d from *Matth.* 26 41. *watch and pray, lest ye enter into*
mptation. And certainly, watchfulness is a most requisit
ece of armour, that *after we have done all, we may stand*;
t only because watchfulness is that which discovereth un-
a Christian his weakness and inability, for a Christian to
e convinced of this, it is his strength, as is clear from 2.
r. 12. 10, *when am I weak, then I am strong*: this is a
radox to nature, but no mystery to grace; but also be-
use watchfulness is a most effectual mean to discover to a
hristian the subtilty and profound deceitfulness of his ad-
rsaries, which maketh him to be much in watching over

his own heart: watchfulnes likewayes is that grace, which discovereth unto a Christian, the formal and remiss acting of grace in this precious combat: when faith beginneth to die, and hope beginneth to languish, and love and zeal beginneth to wax cold, then watchfulnes giveth warning to prayer, that it may go to seek strength for those that were languishing: As likewayes watchfulnes is requisit, because it discovereth unto a Christian; the first motions of his adversaries, and when first he beginneth to stir, which, no doubt, is a great advantage. And more, watchfulnes discovereth unto a Christian, that advantage which he hath over his lusts, which doth exceedingly encourage him to go on in this Spiritual warfare.

There is this thirdly, which is requisit, that a Christian would be much in the meditation upon the sufferings, death and love of *Jesus Christ*. I know not (to a tender Christian) a more effectual mean to Mortifie his Affections & lusts, then this, this is clear that it is so, not only from 2. *Cor.* 5. 14. 15. where *Paul* saith. *The love of Christ did constrain him, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead, that we should henceforth no more live to our selves.* And *Peter* presseth this, 1. *Pet.* 1. 18. compared with verse 20. *Be ye holy as he is holy*; and he subjoyneth the reason of it, *for ye are bought with a price, even with the incorruptible blood of Jesus Christ:* and 1. *Pet.* 4. 1, 2. he presseth the doctrine of Mortification from this, that *Christ* was crucified in the flesh: and it is clear from *Psal.* 26. 3. where the great argument which perswaded *David* to pursue after sincerity, was this, *for the love of God is always before my eyes.* And is not this a sweet portraicture, a wayes to contemplat and behold, to look upon love, *until ye be changed into that same Image from glory to glory.* And certainly *Christs* death and love must have a most effectual influence upon this: Can one read these words, *he sweat drops of blood*; and that word, *if it be possible, let this cup depart from me.* Can you read these words and not be provoked to hate sin with a perfect hatred? Can ye look on that which crucified *Christ*, and brought him so low? If such a supposition had been possible, that all that were sinners had been standing round about the cross, in the

ay that *Christ* was hanged up betwixt heaven and earth, in he day that his precious body was dropping down drops f blood, might not ye have said. O! what a thing muſt hat be which we call ſin, that hath brought him ſo low? nd may not the reflect thoughts upon the love of *Christ*, rovoke you to this, that if *Christ* hath ſo far condeſcended unto you, ought not ye to pleaſe him, and give obedience to his Commandments? Who would diſpute the ommands of ſuch a One? And it is certain, that if we would meditate on theſe things till we wondered, and wonder till we loved, no doubt, it ſhould perſwade you o be endeavouring Mortification of your luſts. *Christs* eath hath not only a moral influence (of which we have poken) but it hath a phyſical influence alſo upon the mortification of ſin: for *we are bought* (ſaith the Apoſtle *Peter* 1. *Pet.* 1. 20.) *with a price from our vain converſation*: *Christ* hath crucified the damning power of ſin, and hath urchaſed this gift, the Spirit of Sanctification, to crucifie the dominion of ſin.

There is this fourthly which is requiſite, that a Chriſtian under debates with luſts, be much in the exerciſe of he grace of faith: It is a moſt inſenſible and unknown help o our apprehenſion: we think faith is a help, when all hings are deſperate. And therefore we judge prayer a more ſuitable help to ſenſe and apprehenſion: therefore a Chriſtian under the prevailing of his corruptions, will be more in the imployment of the grace of prayer, than in the imployment of the grace of faith; though we may ſay this o the advantage of the grace of faith; that it hath a moſt effectual and moſt divine influence for the crucifying of luſts: If ſo we may ſpeak, faith is that that cometh nearſt *himſelf*; for faith, (as it is ſpoken of it) hath a kind of Omnipotency, as it is ſaid, *all things are poſſible for thoſe that believe.* Now this is clear not only from 1 *Joh.* 5. 5. *This is our victory, whereby we overcome the world, even our faith:* and it is clear from *Eph.* 6. 16. *Above all things take ye the ſhield of faith, by which you may quench the fiery darts of the Devil.* And certainly had we ſo much faith, as a grain of muſtard ſeed, we might ſay to every mountain that is in our way, *be removed, and hurled into the midſt of*

sea, and it should obey us. We shall clear the Influence of faith in the mortifying of corruption, not only in this, that the grace of faith, discovereth unto a Christian that super-eminent and precious excellency of Jesus Christ, at the appearance of which, the glory and luster of our Idols do disappear. We think our Idols are like stars, that in the night do appear, and seem beautiful creatures, but when once that *Sun*, even *the Sun of righteousness* doth arise, then their glory is not seen, neither can they be beheld. Saw you never such a sight of him, that constrained you to cry forth, *what have I to do any more with Idols?* If such a supposition were possible, that any Idol should get entrance above it should get no entertainment there; for they are upheld by an infinit strength that cannot fail: As likewayes the influence of faith may be cleared in this, that it is that grace, that doth lay hold upon the promises, by which and thorow which, strength from *the head* is conveyed unto the combatant. As for example, when a believer is wrestling with his lusts, faith layeth hold upon the promise of help, and by it, layeth hold on *Jesus Christ*, who is the Promiser. As likewayes the influence of Faith may be cleared in this, Faith is that grace, which discovereth to a Christian, *that crown and recompense of reward*, one sight & view of which maketh love and zeal take fire, and maketh them *to tread upon the high places of the earth*, that when the Archers shoot at them, and do grievously wound them; yet their bow doth abide in its strength.

There is this mean likewayes, by which a Christian would mortifie his predominant lusts, and it is this, that he would be much in entertaining the grace of tenderness, *Joseph*-like to cry forth, when temptation doth assail him, *shall I do this and sin against God.* I am perswaded that sin not resisted in its motions, doth procure hardness, & And likewayes we may say, that sin resisted in its beginnings doth bring forth the grace of tenderness, in a most effectual and eminent way.

And there is this mean likewayes which is requisit, that a Christian be much in the apprehension of death, judgement, and eternity: these three much meditated upon would make us affraid to sin. I think a Christian never walketh

walketh as he ought, till he walk so, as if each moment next to that wherein he liveth, he had the expectation of appearing before the judgement seat of *Christ*. O: but it would be a sad dispensation to many, to have this day a summonds without continuation of dayes, to appear before that dreadful and terrible tribunal of *Jesus Christ*, when the books shall be opened, wherein your wanderings are written, and the books of your consciences shall be opened, that shall lay *Amen* to every thing that is recorded within the volume of these books: this is clear from *Acts* 17: 30. 31. *He hath commanded all men every where to repent*, and the argument enforcing it is, because *he hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the world by this man Jesus Christ*: as likewayes it is clear in *Eccles*. 11. 9. where *Solomon* presseth by way of holy Ironie (for so the scope is) young men not to take their pleasures in the morning of their time, because for all these things *God should bring them to judgement*: And we wish that that *memento*, which did always walk with a holy man, might walk with you, and sound in your ears, *Awake, and come to judgement*, that it may be that which may regulat your walk. I say not so much, but be ware to entertain your lusts, lest judgement overtake you, the stones of the wall of this house shall bear witness against you in the day of the Lord that ye have been invited to flee from the wrath to come, and have refused the precious offers of a crucified Saviour. We would obtest and beseech you that, if there be a *God*, if there be an eternity, if there be a Heaven, which are most certain and infallible, if there be a hell, and everlasting separation from the presence of the *Lord*, and if you have precious and immortal souls, that you would tender your own salvation, and speak much of *Peters* divinity, *pity your selves*, for you are destroying your selves through the want of knowledge, and if we may say it, hell is enlarging it self wide for the receiving of many of the inhabitants of this place, and of many that live in this generation, who are destitute and void of the grace of the living *God*.

Now that which secondly we shall speak to shall be this, what are the evidences and tokens of this, when lust hath dominion over one? And we shall shortly point out the

evidences of luſt, when it hath dominion; And we conceive, this firſt may evidence it, when one wins to ſuch a length, as they can commit ſin with delight, and with greedineſs, when it is pleaſure to them to go after the heart of their deteſtable things, then ſin hath dominion over one: as it is clear, ſin hath dominion over thoſe made mention of; 2, Pet. 2, 13. *They account it pleaſure to riot in the day-time*, and are ſporting themſelves with their own deceivings; ſuch fools as *Solomon* ſpeaketh of, *making a mock at ſin*: and likewayes it is clear of thoſe that are made mention of, *Eph.* 4. 19. *They commit iniquity with greedineſs*, and as the Prophet ſpeaketh in another place, *their hearts are mad upon their Idols.*

There is this ſecondly which may evidence it, and it is this, when one ſinneth with his predominant luſt without conviction, or if they be convinced, their convictions do ſuddenly evaniſh, like thoſe made mention of, *Jer.* 6. 15. *were they aſhamed, when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all aſhamed, neither could they bluſh*: They had won to ſuch a length in impiety, that not only they would not do it: but they could not do it: and that ſame is made mention of, *Jer*, 8. 12. It is clear likewayes, *Jer*, 3 3: *Thou hadſt a whores forehead, thou refuſedſt to be aſhamed*; and from *Prov.* 30. 20. Where the adulterous woman ſaith, that *ſhe hath done no wickedneſs.* When you are brought unto ſuch a length of impiety, then know that you have yielded your ſelves ſervants unto unrighteouſneſs for a time.

There is this which may evidence it likeways, and it is, this, when one can commit iniquity upon ſmall temptations, yea upon none at all: This did prove that that ſin of Adultery had ſome dominion over *David*, when he did commit it upon ſo ſmall or no Temptation; For this is brought in to aggravat it, 2 Sam. 12. 8. *I gave thee thy Maſters wives into thy boſom*: And it is moſt Emphatically aggravate, *verſe* 2. 7. one poor Man ſhould have had one ewe Lamb, and yet he had ſo many, and that yet he ſhould purſue after that: And moſt clearly, Iſa. 5. 18. *woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of Vanity, and ſin as it were with a Cart-rope*: The meaning of theſe words we

we conceive it to be this, that they did most violently without any Allurement or Entisement, pursue after the Heart of their detestable things: Certainly, those may suspect themselves, that upon the first presentation of an Idol, they presently bow down their Heads and Worship it.

There is this likeways which may evidence it, and it is this, when one, notwithstanding of the Convictions of the Omniscience of *God* that doth behold them, will commit such an Iniquity: No doubt, then sin is brought unto a most damnable, and most Atrocious height: Then sin had dominion over *Er*, Genes. 38. 7. *He did evil in the sight of the Lord*. The meaning of which word we conceive to be this, that he did the evil, notwithstanding he was convinced of the Omniscience and all-seing eye of *God*: And it is Recorded of *Ahab*, 1 Kings 21. 20. *He sold himself to commit Iniquity in the sight of the Lord*, when notwithstanding he knew that he had *seven eyes that ran to and fro through the earth*, yet he did act these Abominations.

And there is this lastly, that doth evidence it, when one doth sin with much Deliberation and Advice, they are not overhailed by their Temptations and Lusts, and they sit down in Council to consult how such a thing may be effectuat: then had iniqnity dominion over those that are made mention of, *Micah* 2. 1. *Wo to them that devise iniquity upon their Beds*, that sit down deliberatly in the silent seasons of the night to contrive the mischievous Plots of their Hearts: And we would only say to such, read the 3. or 4. *v.* of that Chapter, where *God* saith in a sweet and just Opposition, in regard of their devising of Iniquity; *Behold* (saith he) *I will devise against this People*: God will deliberatly and with much Indignation, punish those that sin deliberatly, and it is clear from, *Jer.* 18. 12.

Now we shall shut up our Discourse at this time, only we would speak a little unto this, why *God* doth sometimes think fit to expose his own unto some dominion of their Lusts? It was a notable and most true saying of a Heathen, *As many Vices, as many Masters*, for every Lust is a Master; And we may say, every Lust hath a servant, and some have ten thousand waiting on: And we conceive

when

when a Christian beginneth to establish his own Righteousness, then he is in hazard to be given up for a time unto the Dominion of his sin, This is clear, *Ezek.* 33. 13. If he trust to his own Righteousness, and commit Iniquity; And there may be this reason of it, that they may know to distinguish, betwixt the Yoke of *Christ*, and the Yoke and Bondage of Sin, as it is pointed at, *Deut.* 28. 47, 48. And we conceive this may be a reason of it, because *God* intendeth to magnifie the glory of his unsearchable Grace, by delivering them from the door of the Pit, when this Song shall be sung, *This my Son was dead, and is alive, and was lost, and is found*: This is the Song of restoring Grace, after Grace hath once prevented the Christian.

Now we will desire you seriously to intend this precious Work of Mortification: The most part of us are Idol-Christians, we have hands, and we do nothing, we have eyes and we see not, and we have feet and walk not: And certainly, that Practice and Maxime of *Machiavel* is much practised amongst us, he thought it was advantagious to have the possession of Religion, and of Vertue; But he thought it dangerous to have the reality of Religion: There are many that desire to be clothed with the Coat of *Christ* that never desired Conformity with Christ in the Inward man: And we think if *Christ* were to come down from Heaven, he might Preach this to many of us, *Betrayest thou the Son of Man with a Kiss!* There are many that I am sure have a lower Spirit than *Judas*, that would Sell *Christ* at a lower Rate than thirty pieces of Silver: O! Eternity, Eternity, *what shall you do in the day of Desolation, when your Visitation shall come from a far? where shall you flee for help? And where shall you leave your Glory?* I shall shut up all that I have to say with this, the wrath of that living, but contemptible stone, that was cut out of the Mountains, shall be more intollerable than the weight of Mountains and Hills. Therefore the Reprobates rather choise to be under the weight of Hills and Mountains, than to be under the weight of this living Corner-stone, but so much despised. Will you not imbrace him? may not Angels laugh at your Folly, and have you in holy Derision? The triumph is above, and it is not long before

his own shall cry forth, *it is finished.* And no doubt, if we were much in the exercise of Faith, we should easily accomplish this Warfare: We may call Faith *Eliezer*, of whom it is reported, that he did so pursue his Enemies, that the People returned to gather up the Spoils. Love, Prayer, and Joy, will eternally sit down and reap the sweet Fruits of the Victory of Faith. Now to him that can make you overcome thorow the *Bloud* of the Lamb, and the word of your Testimony, we desire to give *Praise.*

SERMON VII.

Gal. 5. 24. And they that are Christs, have Crucified the Flesh with the Affections and Lusts.

IT was a divine Sentence of that Master of Experience, that *Love covereth a multitude of Sins*; We may say, that precious and infinite Love that *Christ* hath had to Sinners, *hath covered a multitude of sins*; Though this is a Lamentation, and shall be for a Lamentation, that the most part of us have not come that length of Religion, which the Publicans and Sinners did attain to, which is, *to love those that love them.* Doth not *Christ* his engraving of his love to Sinners, in Letters of Blood, call for this at our hand, that we should devote our selves wholly to him? But we confess, such is that desperate enmity and deceitfulness of the Hearts of all flesh, that if all who have been Partakers of the Divine Nature, or shall be Partakers of it, had but one Heart to conduct them to Heaven, they would misguide it in the way, it being the Matchless and Incommunicable Prerogative of the *Captain of our Salvation*, to guide many Sons and Daughters to Glory. I think if there were a Description to be given of the most part of us, we must give that which is, *Prov.* 6. 13. He speaketh with his feet, and teacheth with his fingers: And the great Lesson that we should teach with our Feet, and preach with our Hands would be *Iniquity, Formality, and Distance from God.* And I would have you who are Expectants of Heaven, and have some small hope of being Eternally with him, to be much in this precious Work of Mortification. There are some so habituat to sin, (if *God*

do

do not prevent them) the last Act they shall commit in this stage of the World, shall be an Act of Iniquity, and they shall breath out their last, in departing from that *invisible Majesty*. There are some that though they live seventy years, they shall not have this to say, of one day of all their Life, that they have devoted and given it to *God*. Mortification is a Mystery to our knowledge, but much more a Mystery to our Practice: It is a wonder that many of us are not Distracted, and that much of *Cain's* Divinity doth not possess us, that *whosoever shall find us by the way, shall kill us*. However, unto those who make any conscience of this Duty, we would say these two things: 1. Ye may yield unto the Premisses and Assertions of misbelief, which they drew from the Dominion of your sin over you, but deny the Conclusions of misbelief: This was the Practice of *David*, *Psal.* 65. 3. there is the Assertion of misbelief in the first words, *Iniquities prevail over me*, but he denyes that Conclusion which we draw from it, *that we are Reprobats*: But Faith doth sweetly subjoyn, *as for our Transgressions, thou wilt purge them away*. This is bad Logick to deny the Conclusion, but precious Divinity: And *secondly*, We would say this to you, that ye may with a great deal of liberty, make use of the dominion of your Iniquity, as an argument to plead with *God* for Pardon, according to that famous Prayer of *David*, Psal. 25. 11. *For thy Names sake, O Lord, pardon mine Iniquity, for it is great*. And we would say likeways, that *God* maketh use of the Iniquities of the children of Men, as an argument to provoke himself unto Mercy, and even those iniquities, which before he hath made use of, as an argument of Justice. It is strange to parallel and compare these two places, *Gen.* 6. 5. with *Gen.* 8. 21. where the reason that *God* giveth of the destruction of the World is this, because that *every Imagination of the thoughts of the Heart of Man, is only evil continually*: And yet, *Chap.* 8. 21. he giveth this as a ground, why he would Curse the World no more for Mans sake, because, saith he, *the Imagination of Mans Heart is evil from his Youth*.

Now we told you at the last occasion we spoke on these words, when we was speaking upon the second thing of Mor-

mortification, which was the extent of it, that a Christian should not only mortifie Original Sin, which is here called *Flesh*, but likeways, he should Mortifie his predominant Idols, which are here called *Affections*; And of these two we have spoken: There is this likewise in the extent of Mortification, that a Christian should Mortifie the first Motions and Tentations unto sin, which are here called *Lusts*. And for clearing what we shall speak upon this; We conceive, that the first Motions of sin do comprehend these two: *First*, That a Christian should study to Mortifie the first Tentations he meets with unto acting, or embracing of any particular Lust. And *Secondly*, That a Christian should study to avoid all appearances of evil, by which he may be brought to the acting of that sin. We shall not stand long to prove that it is the duty of a Christian to do the first; It is clear not only from *Jam.* 4. 7. where we are commanded *to resist the Devil*, which comprehendeth even the resisting of the first Motions of sin, as likeways from 1 *Pet.* 5. 9. *Whom resist, stedfast in the Faith*; But likeways it is clear from the Practice of *David*, *Psal.* 56. 3. where when misbelief began to stir, he put Faith in exercise, *What time* (saith he) *I am afraid, I will trust in thee*. And it is clear from the Practice of *Paul*, 2 *Cor.* 12. 7. where there was a Messenger of Satan given to buffet him, he went and *besought the Lord thrice*. Neither shall we stand to prove, that it is the duty of a Christian to flee the appearances of evil.

It is clear, not only from *Deut.* 12. 30, where it is said, thou shalt not *enquire how the Nations serve their gods*: Ye may suppose that there was no Iniquity in this Iniquity; Yet because it was the appearance of evil, *God* did forbid it: As likeways from *Deut.* 25. 13, 14. *Thou shalt not have in thy Bag, diverse weights, a great and a small*; *Thou shalt not have in thine House diverse Measures, a great and a small*: It might be supposed, that the having of these things when not used, was not unlawfull, but the very having of them, because it was an appearance of evil, it was desired to be shewed: And that remarkable place, *Prov.* 5. 8. *Come not nigh the door of her House, who is a whore*: And that in *Deut.* 12. 3. where the People are com-

commanded, even to forget the Names of Idols. And from *Jude* 23. *to hate the Garments spotted with the Flesh*: And *Deut.* 16. 19. where it is forbidden for *a Judge to take a Gift*, not that there is iniquity in this, but because it is an appearance of evil, lest he should pervert Judgment, it is forbidden.

Now that which first we shall speak to upon this, that a Christian should flee the first Motions and Appearances of Sin, shall be this: To propose some Considerations unto you, that may inforce this duty more.

The first Consideration that we propose is this, that iniquity when it is resisted in its first Motions, is most easily Conquered and Overcome; When Sin is Killed in its Birth, it is Killed with the greatest facility and easiness: And certainly, when we delay the mortifying of our Lusts, and resists not the Devil, it is no wonder that we are led Captive by the hand of our iniquities: It was an antient Saying worthy to be practised, resist the beginning of evil, for the Remedy is evermore difficult in the close, than in the beginning. However, we would give Christians these two Directions for this Consideration. 1. After by the power of Grace, ye have overcome the first Motions of Sin, do not give over your Watch, nor sit down in carnal Confidence, for he will again assail you, even after you have overcome: It is a remarkable word that is annexed to the close of *Christs* Temptations, *Luke* 4. 13. where after Satan was Foiled most remarkably, it is said, *he departed from him for a season*; he had a mind to return, though he was overcome, 2. We say this, that most ordinarily the resisting of the motions of sin, and overcoming of them, if they be not improven with humility, it is the fore-runner of some sad stroak from the hand of the *Lord*.

There is this second consideration that we would propose for inviting of you to resist the first motions of sin and it is this, a Christian that maketh conscience of this duty, ordinarily he is blessed with most divine and precious enjoyments of *Jesus Christ*, let a Christian try this by experience, and when first sin doth assail them, if they will make conscience to resist it, the dew of heaven shall come down

down and ly upon their branch that their glory may be freſh in them, and they ſhall be conſtrained to put up an *Eben-ezer* unto *God*, and to cry forth, *hitherto hath the Lord helped us*; this is clear from *Rom:* 8. 13, *If ye through the Spirit ſhall mortifie the deeds of the fleſh, ye ſhall live*; and clear likewiſe from *Rev.* 2. 17. Where, to the man that is in the way of overcoming, *Chriſt will give him the hidden Manna:* And certainly, we think, if we may make alluſion to theſe words, that curſe is accompliſhed in theſe days, *I will make the heavens braſs, and the earth iron:* There are ſome upon whom it hath not rained theſe three years and ſix moneths, bnt are become as the bottle in the ſmoak, the marrow of whoſe bones is conſumed:

There is this third conſideration that we would propoſe, and it is this, that the reſiſting of the motions and firſt ſtirrings of corruption, is the way to get the ſoul under a moſt divine impreſſion of the ſinfulneſs of ſin: when was it that the Apoſtle *Paul* cried forth, *O wretched man that I am*? was it not, when there was a law in his minde, wreſtling againſt the law of his members? When he was the greateſt wreſtler, then did ſin appear out of meaſure ſinful unto him. I confeſs, that diſtinction which Papiſts do ſo much adore, *of venial and mortal ſins*, I think Chriſtians in their practice do make much uſe of. Are there not many ſins, which ye account venial, and writteth this name upon their forehead, this is a *zoar*, a little thing, and ye deſire to be pardoned, when ye bow your knee in the houſe of *Rimmon*, if ye go no further? but certainly, the way to bring the ſoul to a divine loathing of all ſin, is to be reſiſting the firſt motions of it.

There is this firſt conſideration, that reſiſting of the firſt motions of ſin, is that which keeps the grace of faith much in exerciſe, eſpecially in an hour of trial and of temptation. I think, there is nothing that will darken a Chriſtians evidence ſo much as this, the conviction of this, that there was never a ſin did aſſail them, that was reſiſted in its firſt motions and ſtirrings, I confeſs, I think a bad Conſcience, is the Mother of miſbelief, which the *Apoſtle* doth clearly point at, 1. *Tim.* 3. 9. *Holding* (ſaith he) *the myſtery of faith in a pure conſcience*, as if he would

would have ſaid, that divine and precious gueſt *Faith*, can lodge in no dwelling but a pure and undefiled conſcience: And to make this clear, that the reſiſting of the motions and firſt ſtirrings of ſin, have influence to preſerve faith in exerciſe, ſee *Rev.* 2. 17, *To him that overcometh*, that is in the way of overcoming, *I will give him a new name*; he ſhall know that his name is written in theſe precious records of heaven, and that before the morning ſtars did ſing for joy, e're ever the corner ſtone of the world was laid, he was engraven upon the heart of peecious ones, in indelible letters which cannot be blotted out: As alſo, it is clear from, *Rom.* 7. compared with 8. and 1. *verſe*: when was it that Paul cryed forth, *There is no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Jeſus?* was it not then, when he was wreſtling againſt corruptions?

And there is this laſt conſideration, which we ſhall propoſe to enforce this duty, and it is this, that not reſiſting ſin in its firſts motions, doth ordinarily creat and bring to paſs much hardneſs and ſtupidity of heart, when we ſilence our convictions with lazineſs, and anſwer our reprover with this, *I have put off my coat, how ſhall I put it on?* I ſhall ſay to ſuch, it is a bad omen and ſign that God is upon his way to ceaſe to be ſuch a reprover unto you: I confeſs, there is a difference betwixt ſinning againſt light, and ſinning with light; and we conceive that there are many guilty of the one, that are not guilty of the other: However, if once ye ſhall come this length, as when temptation doth aſſail you, to make a covenant of peace and agreement with it, ye may expect, if you go to heaven, you ſhall be ſafe, but ſo as by fire: and we confeſs there are ſome whoſe conſciences may bear them record, that they never knew what it was to reſiſt the firſt motions and ſtirrings of corruption. It is a leſſon of ſo high nature, that it would need explication unto them: and think ye that ye can attain unto that living and precious hope, who never knew to wraſtle with ſin, and with your corruptions? is ſuch a deluſion as this amongſt you, that ye can reign though ye fight not, and triumph though ye contend not? ye may reign to your own apprehenſion as kings without *Chriſt* this way, but ſhall never reign as kings with him, if ye do not ſtudy to mortify your luſts. That

That which secondly we shall speak upon this, shall be this, what is the reason that Christians do not resist sin in its first motions and stirrings wishin them? And we conceive, that it doth either proceed from this, that Christians are not much in the exercise of the grace of watchfulness. I think temptations seises oft-times upon a Christians affections before they be awar, hence it is, that when the Apostle *Peter* is prescribing this direction of resisting the motions of sin, he requireth this as an antecedent duty, that they should be watchful, 1. *Pet.* 5. 8, 9. *Be V gilant*, and then, *resist him, stedfast in the faith*: when once a Christian hath given over his watch, he is a prey unto his lusts: we may certainly say of him, that he is a city broken down and without wals, that doth not exercise the grace of watchfulness. Or else it doth proceed from this, that Christians are not in a divine and spiritual frame to resist temptations, when they are first assailed with them. We confess, our spirits oft-times are so loadned with the pleasure of a world, and are so much taken up with the passing delights of a transient world, that when temptations do come; we do easily condescend to imbrace them: hence it is that the Apostle *James* when he is passing this exhortation upon these to whom he writeth, *resist the Devil*, he subjoyneth this in the 9, *vers*, as a concomitant duty, *draw near to God*, as if he would have said. If temptations find you at a distance with *God*, then ye may cry forth, *have pity on me*; for ye are a prey, if ye be not found within sight of him, and if your hearts do not study to walk in the sight of his precious face. As likewayes, *Peter* doth prescribe this, 1. *Pet.* 5. 8, 9. *Be sober*, and then, *resist him stedfast in the faith*: and more clearly it is pointed at, *Matth*: 26. 41, *watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation*, And I would only say this unto you, it is a most high and divine walk alwayes to be living within sight of *God*, that when ye go down to the grave, ye may have this to say, *I* am now to change my place, but not to change my company; heaven may be to you but a precious passing and transition unto a more constant and immediat enjoyment of *God*: Or else it doth proceed from this, that Christians when they are first assailed with the motions

tions and ſtirrings of corruptions, thy dow not do violence to their own fleſh. I confeſs theſe two Idols, which are dependant one upon another, that idol of *Self*, and that idol of *Eaſe*, they are the cut-throats of a Chriſtians diligence, and are the great occaſion, why we do not overcome, *through the word of our teſtimony and by the blood of the Lamb*; Think ye that it is an eaſie thing to overcome temptations? I confeſs, thoſe that are not acquainted with it, may probably ſay it; but this is certain, that ſuch kind goeth not forth, but by faſting and prayer. It coſt *Chriſt* much toil to liberate you from the guilt of ſin, and it will coſt you much toil to liberat your ſelves from the filth of ſin. And there is this laſtly from which it proceeds, that Chriſtians do not mortifie ſin, in its firſt ſtirrings and motions, becauſe they are not living under an impreſſion of the ſinfulneſs of ſin: We conceive, that oft-times when temptations do aſſail us, we think, *departing from God* a diſpenſible evil, and that which eaſily we may obtain pardon for: I would preſcribe that unto you, as one of the greateſt myſteries of Chriſtianity, and bleſſed, bleſſed is he eternally that hath win to it, and it is this, to be living conſtantly under a divine impreſſion of the ſinfulneſs of ſin, that ye may take it up, in its nature, and in its effects. I think, if one ſhould come from the dead, having the chains of everlaſting wrath, wreathed about his feet, and the ſhekels of the fury of the *Lord*, wreathed about his hands, and ſhould preach to you, concerning the nature of ſin; and how damnable a thing it is, there are many who would not take heed much to ſuch doctrine.

Now that which thirdly we propoſed to ſpeak to from theſe words was, the difficulty to attain to Mortification, which we conceive, was held forth under that word Crucify; which doth import, that Mortification is a longſome work, as crucifying was a longſome death: as likewayes it doth import, that Mortification was a painful work, as crucifying was one of the moſt painful deaths: And likewayes it holds forth the intenſive nature of Mortification, that a Chriſtian ſhould ſtudy not to be content until he diekill corruption: And concerning theſe three we ſhall ſpeak together: And we ſhall point out the difficulty of attaining to Mortification in theſe things. Is there no

this which points out the difficulty of it, that there is a woful unity of affection betwixt us and our lusts, they are dear to us as the right eye, and our right hand, and right foot: And I confess, to convince you of that unity that is betwixt you and your lusts, I think that expression which ordinarily ye use, when one is reproving you for your passion, or for your swearing, may suffice; ye will answer, what alleth you at me? which doth speak this, that you say, your lusts and you are one. And I confess *Paul* hath an expression like this, *Rom.* 7. 8. *I know* (saith he) *that in me dwelleth no good thing.* There are two *me's* in a Christian; there is a spiritual and refined *Me*, there is a carnal and a wicked *Me*, as *Paul* doth distinguish them in that verse, *I know* (saith he) *that in me dwelleth no good thing*: and yet he subjoyneth, *in me to will that is present*, which is one good thing. And we confess, that word is accomplished in *Me*, *They are joyned to their Idols, let them alone!*

There is that secondly which pointeth out the difficulty of Mortification, and it is the strength of those lusts that are within us, we think the Scripture is so abundant in pointing out the strength of sin, that we need not speak much to it: there is that expression, *Rom.* 8. 2. Which is a most strange word, it is there called *the law of sin and of death*: as it were, sin pleads for as much subjection from us, as if we were tyed by law to obey it: And in that verse there is a sweet contrariety of laws, *the law of the spirit of life, hath made me free from the law of sin and of death.* If so we may speak, there is, in a manner, one decree and statute of heaven declaring another to be null; for it was a law in heaven, that we should be under death, because we were under sin; but behold, here is a posterior law that doth sweetly reduce this prior law, and it is *the law of the spirit of life.* As likewayes, that expression pointeth forth the strength of corruption, which is 2 *Cor.* 10. 4. where he saith, we are to fight for *the pulling down of strong holds*, as it were, sin fortifieth it self within our bosome: and we confess, if this were believed, we should study to mortifie our corruptions with a great deal of more pains and constancy. There is this likewayes, which pointeth

it out, and it is, the deceitfulneſs of our luſts, and the ſubtility which they vent in their deceiving of us; which is clear from that expreſſion, *Jam.* 1. 14. *When a man,* (ſaith he) *is drawn away, and entiſed of his luſts*: the word there that is rendered *entiſed*, is taken from the fiſhers, who deceive the ſilly fiſhes, with an apparent bait of pleaſure. We confeſs, theſe two are the great obſtructions of a Chriſtians progreſs to heaven, there are temptations of fear, and there are temptations from advantage: which two, if they were removed, we might with greater facility overcome our luſts, and ſing a ſong of triumph over our Idols: oft-times that expreſſion is recorded *deceitfulneſs of ſin*: we confeſs, if this were believed, we would uſe a more divine and holy prudence, leaſt we ſhould be enſnared. And to ſhut up out diſcourſe upon Mortification, upon which we have been ſpeaking ſo long; we ſhall only ſpeak a little to obviat any miſtake that may be about the difficulty of any Mortification, which ſhall include that which we intended to ſpeak upon; which was the certainty of overcoming.

And that which firſt we would ſay unto you is this. Be perſwaded of this, that there is more divine ſatisfaction in the reſiſting of your luſts, and wreſtling againſt them, then there is in the actual fruition of them all: that word of *Solomons*, *Stollen waters are ſweet*, ſaith the adulterous woman, but at laſt they ſhall be convinced of the contrary: and that word which he ſpeaketh, *Bread of deceit is pleaſant to the mouth, but he knoweth not, that the dead are there &c.* And we think the *Apoſtle* ſweetly chydeth the Romans concerning this thing, *what fruit have you of thoſe things, whereof you are now aſhamed?* It is ſad to think upon that woful diſappointment that many ſhall meet with

There is this which we would likewayes ſay, that there is a divine certainty of a Chriſtians overcoming; let the difficulties be never ſo many, and (O beloved in the Lord) are not theſe glad tydings from a far Country, and may be as cold water to a thriſty mans ſoul, that a Chriſtian ſhall once overcome: And I confeſs there are theſe four things, that ſpeak the certainty of a Chriſtians overcoming: 1. The faithfulneſs, and the love of *Jeſus Chriſt*

is laid is pawn for our overcoming; which is clear from that *Joh. 6. 39. And this is the fathers will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should loss nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day:* And we confess, this is certain, it is more of *Christs* concernment that a believer should overcome then it is of his own. O! what songs to the faithfulness of *Christ*, what songs to his love shall be sung that day, when the precious troup of his Saints, shall return from the day of judgement, and that general infare shall be of all those that have been begotten unto a lively hope, when they shall convey *Christ* home, through the ports of the *new Jerusalem*, every one having a harp of God in his hand, and shall cry forth, *Hallelujah, Hallelujah to him that sitteth upon the Throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever*, that song shall have no period, though it have a beginning.

There is this likwayes which pointeth forth their certainty of overcoming, *Christ* hath overcome, and therefore Christian shall overcome. It was the sweet divinity of the Apostle *Paul Heb. 2. 9, 10.* there is a promise (saith he) that all things shall be put under our feet, but we see not that promise accomplished, saith he: I see one thing accomplished, which is a pledge of it, I see *Jesus Christ, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and with Majesty: Christ* is in heaven, and he must be there: and that word *Joh. 16. last, Be of good cheer*, saith he, *for I have overcome the World*, which is a pledge and certain token, that he shall once overcome.

There is this likewise which points forth their certainty of overcoming, that that same power which was exercised in bringing Christ from death, and in making him to overcome principalities and powers, is communicate to believers to make them overcome; as it is clear from *Eph. 1. 19. 20.* where it is said, *That power that wrought mightily in Christ, in raise him from the dead, doth also work in those that believe.* O! Christians, heirs of the grace of life, believe it, that Omnipotency is engaged on your behalf; and have you not learned that first point of the Creed, that *with God it is nothing impossible to God*; and so when you are constrained sometimes to cry out, *who shall stand before*

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it our, and it is, the deceitfulneſs of our luſts, and the ſubtility which they vent in their deceiving of us; which is clear from that expreſſion, *Jam.* 1. 14. *When a man,* (ſaith he) *is drawn away, and entiſed of his luſts:* the word there that is rendered *entiſed,* is taken from the fiſhers, who deceive the ſilly fiſhes, with an apparent bait of pleaſure. We confeſs, theſe two are the great obſtructions of a Chriſtians progreſs to heaven, there are temptations of fear, and there are temptations from advantage: which two, if they were removed, we might with greater facility overcome our luſts, and ſing a ſong of triumph over our Idols: oft-times that expreſſion is recorded *deceitfulneſs of ſin:* we confeſs, if this were believed, we would uſe a more divine and holy prudence, leaſt we ſhould be enſnared. And to ſhut up out diſcourſe upon Mortification, upon which we have been ſpeaking ſo long; we ſhall only ſpeak a little to obviat any miſtake that may be about the difficulty of any Mortification, which ſhall include that which we intended to ſpeak upon; which was the certainty of overcoming.

And that which firſt we would ſay unto you is this, Be perſwaded of this, that there is more divine ſatisfaction in the reſiſting of your luſts, and wreſtling againſt them, then there is in the actual fruition of them all: that word of *Solomons, Stollen waters are ſweet,* ſaith the adulterous woman, but at laſt they ſhall be convinced of the contrary: and that word which he ſpeaketh, *Bread of deceit is pleaſant to the mouth, but he knoweth not, that the dead are there &c.* And we think the *Apoſtle* ſweetly chydeth the Romans concerning this thing, *what fruit have you of thoſe things, whereof you are now aſhamed?* It is ſad to think upon that woful diſappointment that many ſhall meet with.

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is laid is pawn for our overcoming; which is clear from that *Joh.* 6. 39. *And this is the fathers will which hath ſent me, that of all which he hath given me I ſhould loſe nothing, but ſhould raiſe it up again at the laſt day:* And we confeſs, this is certain, it is more of *Chriſts* concernment that a believer ſhould overcome then it is of his own. O! what ſongs to the faithfulneſs of *Chriſt*, what ſongs to his love ſhall be ſung that day, when the precious troup of his Saints, ſhall return from the day of judgement, and that general infare ſhall be of all thoſe that have been begotten unto a lively hope, when they ſhall convey *Chriſt* home, through the ports of the *new Jeruſalem*, every one having a harp of God in his hand, and ſhall cry forth, *Hallelujah, Hallelujah to him that ſitteth upon the Throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever*, that ſong ſhall have no period, though it have a beginning.

There is this likwayes which pointeth forth their certainty of overcoming, *Chriſt* hath overcome, and therefore Chriſtian ſhall overcome. It was the ſweet divinity of the Apoſtle *Paul Heb.* 2. 9, 10. there is a promiſe (ſaith he) that all things ſhall be put under our feet, but we ſee not that promiſe accompliſhed, ſaith he: I ſee one thing accompliſhed, which is a pledge of it, I ſee *Jeſus Chriſt, for the ſuffering of death, crowned with glory and with Majeſty*: *Chriſt* is in heaven, and he muſt be there: and that word *Joh.* 16. laſt, *Be of good cheer*, ſaith he, *for I have overcome the World*, which is a pledge and certain token, that he ſhall once overcome.

There is this likewiſe which points forth their certainty overcoming, that that ſame power which was exerciſed in bringing Chriſt from death, and in making him to overcome principalities and powers, is communicate to believers to make them overcome; as it is clear from *Eph.* 1. 19. 20. where it is ſaid, *That power that wrought mightily in Chriſt, in raiſe him from the dead, doth alſo work in thoſe that believe.* O! Chriſtians, heirs of the grace of life, believe it, that Omnipotency is engaged on your behalf; and are you not learned that firſt point of the Creed, that *with God is nothing impoſſible to God*; and ſo when you are ſtrained ſometimes to cry out, *Who ſhall ſtand before*

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the children of Anak? Content your ſelves with this, that there is nothing too hard for him.

And there is this laſtly, which points it out, that divine and inviſible knot of union that is betwixt Chriſt and his members: Is Chriſt above? the members muſt follow; for ye know, though Chriſt be the fulneſs of the Saints, yet the Saints are the fulneſs of Chriſt: there is a ſweet mutual fulfilling and accompliſhing each one of another: know ye not that word, *that where I am, there they may be alſo*: I think of all the words Chriſt ever ſpake to the Father, that word was the moſt imperious and commanding-like word which he hath, *Joh.* 17. 24. *I will* (ſaith he) *that thoſe that thou haſt given me, be where I am.* It was not his prayer which came that length, he willed it, and would not be contradicted. And certainly there is nothing that may comfort you in the hour of tryal ſo much as this, Chriſt is upon his way to relieve you, and ye are upon your way of overcoming: And I ſhall only ſay that word, which ought to be your practice, 1 *Joh.* 5. 18. *whoſoever is born of God ſinneth not, and that wicked one toucheth him not*: That ordinary expreſſion which you have, you ſhould not rub cloaths with him, nor touch him: And to thoſe that are walking in the broad path of ſin, I ſhall only ſpeak that to you which is, *Job* 21. 20. *His eyes ſhall ſee his deſtruction, and he ſhall drink of the wrath of the Almighty.* Your eyes and your taſte ſhall be ſatisfied; and that word which is verſ. 30. *he ſhall be reſerved to the day of deſtruction*, or as the word in the original, *he ſhall be reſerved to the day of wrath*: as it were there ſhall be a combination of wrath, and juſtice that ſhall ſelfe upon you. Now to him who is upon his way, who ſhall come and will not tarry, and whoſe reward is with him, we deſire to give praiſe.

SERMO

SERMON VIII.

Gal. 6. 14. *By whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.*

CHristianity doth consist in a blessed exchange of affections, a soul dying in its affections and respects to all things, that are here below; and living and advancing in its desires towards him, who is that blessed and universal good. It ought to be that arch-plot, and great design, that Christians ought to promove, to attain to that original unity, which once was in mans affections towards God. O! what blessedness did *Adam* enjoy, while he did stand in that estate wherein he was created, he having a blessed harmony of all his affections towards God, and likewise there being a most divine correspondence and blessed familiarity betwixt heaven and earth, betwixt him who sitteth on the Throne and the footstool: but that was most eminently verified, that *man being in honour, did not abide.* O! what anxious and and perplexing thoughts had poor *Adam*, no doubt, some hours after his fall, when he did reflect upon that which was once his condition, and did compare it with that which was now his lot, might not he take up that lamentation over himself, *Man in his best estate is altogether vanity*; And likewise he might have that proverb taken up of himself, *How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning*? Now man by losing that blessed unity that was in his affections, hath contracted a woful and infinit diversity in his affections towards these things that are here below: so that those affections which did once streetly run in one channel toward God, are now divided and separated in many channels, toward those things that are below him: And there is nothing beneath the sun, that leadeth captive so many of our desires as the world; therefore it were your advantage to be crucified to the world, and to have the world crucified to you: that you may discover, that endless vanity, and unspeakable vexatio

vexation of ſpirit, that is in all things that are here: The world is a perfect compend & compleat epitome of all misery: God himſelf is that compend of all bleſſedneſs, ſo that there is nothing that we can take up under this, but it is moſt eminently in him. It is a duty which is much underva-lued in theſe days, Chriſtians to be promoving in that bleſſed work of having themſelves crucified to the world, & hav-ing the world crucified to them: O! how ſuitable is it for thoſe who are heirs and expectants of that bleſſed hope and everlaſting enjoyment of being with God, who is the Judge of all fleſh, and with Jeſus Chriſt, who is the Me-diator of the new Covenant, and with the Innumerable company of holy Angels, and to be made heirs and co-heirs with Jeſus Chriſt. Is it not below you to be much taken up in your vain and anxious purſuits after thoſe things that are here below? The objects of the deſires of your immortal ſpirits ought to be more high than things be-low, and ought to be more divine than things humane: your affections ought to be aſcending as pillars of ſmoak, and ye ſhould be breathing after that bleſſed day when there ſhall be a confinement of all your affections on him. We have at ſome occaſions ſpoken unto you, of the grace of humility, and of the grace of love, the one teaching us to undervalue our ſelf, the other teaching us to value God. And had you been much taken up in the ſpiritual and liv-ing exerciſe of thoſe, there ſhould not have been much difficulty to perſwade you at this time. We ſhall not in-ſiſt long in telling what Mortification is; It is a conſtant and bleſſed endeavour of the Chriſtian, to remove out of his way all thoſe impediments, that do interrupt the ex-erciſe of love; As likewiſe, it is that which entertaineth a conſtant and perpetual antipathy and holy indignation againſt every thing, thorow which his conformity with God, and that perfect likeneſs and ſimilitude with his Maker, might be in any way impaired. Mortification doth not conſiſt in thoſe unconſtant and unequal exerciſes of mortifying our luſts, it conſiſts not in thoſe violent flaſhes of holy zeal and indignation againſt our iniquities; for though that indignation be violent for its time, yet it doth quickly evaniſh and paſs away: but that grace of Mortifi-

cation

ilon muſt be a conſtant and dayly exerciſe; We will ſo= ace our ſelves in the chambers of our imagry, by behold= ng our Idols pourtrayed upon the wall, we will ſtudy to eceive ſatisfaction in our apprehenſions, when we can= ot receive ſatisfaction in the actual fruition of them: Such s likewiſe the woful deſperatneſs of the hearts of the chil= ren of men, that when God hath put a worm to the root of that gourd, under the ſhadow of which, we uſed to ſo= ace our ſelves, we cry forth from a diſcontented humor, *it is better for us to die then to live:* O! there are many ere, to whom it would be death to out-live their Idols; heir Idols and they are pleaſant in their lives, and they eſire not to be divided in their deaths. 3. Mortificati= n doth not conſiſt in that partial and divided way of mor= ifying our corruptions, we taking vengeance upon ſome of our luſts, but with *Saul*, ſparing it who is the King. *Naaman the Syrian* muſt have an indulgence of bowing his nee in the houſe of *Rimmon*: *Lot* muſt plead for the ſpa= ing of *Zoar*, that ſmall thing; and ſo when we are intend= ng that work of Mortification, we plead for the ſparing of heſe things, which we call *Zoars*, theſe ſmall, but our aſter corruptions. Certainly that evangelick Mortifica= ion which is required of us, doth not conſiſt in this, for e muſt intend an univerſal ſeparation betwixt us and all ur Idols, we muſt caſt away all our Idols to the moles nd to the batts, and *we muſt defile the covering of them, nd be alone muſt be the cover of our eyes*: He never knew hat the grace of Mortification meant, who never ſet a= out the accompliſhment of the ruine of that great and aſter-Idol which domineereth over him: And we con= eive, that the beſt and moſt ſolid way of knowing our rowth in Mortification, is by reflecting upon the decay f theſe Idols, which are our predominants, other ſins hich aſſail us may decay, and their ſtrength wax weak, nd yet Mortification not be on the growing hand, for here are many of our luſts, that rather die by conceſſion, hen by conſtraint; there are many of our Idols, that ra= her go out of us, then are caſt out.

Now the firſt thing that a Chriſtian ought to endeavour o mortifie is, his love to the world, which was the pra=

&tice of this holy man: In the words he pointeth out u
to us that way, wherein he did attain this compleat an
ſpiritual Mortification to the world, holden forth to u
In theſe words, by whom, which doth relate unto Jeſu
Chriſt, who is made mention of in the words going be
fore: or, as the words may be rendered, *by which I a
crucified to the world*, and ſo they relate unto the croſs o
Jeſus Chriſt. Now under this notion of being crucifie
he doth certainly hold forth unto us, that great difficul
that is in accompliſhing the work of Mortification; An
under this name of being crucified, he holdeth forth unt
us, the longſomneſs of the time that we muſt ſpend, be
fore we can attain compleat Mortification, Crucifying be
ing one of the moſt lent and ſlow of all violent deaths
Mortification is not a work of one day, it will coſt us ma
ny days and years, before we ſhall cruſh the head of him
who hath ſo oft-times cruſhed our heel, before that bleſſe
promiſe ſhall be fulfilled, that *all things ſhall be put in ſub
jection unto us*: Sin doth moſt eaſily invade us, and tak
poſſeſſion of us, but it is not eaſily diſpoſſeſſed; for ex
cept we had the infinit ſtrength of him who is Jehovah
we might ſit down, and cloſe our hands, and never min
to oppoſe theſe Idols, under whoſe ſubjection we are:
This word of being crucified, doth likewiſe hold forth the
painfulneſs and uneaſineſs of this work of Mortification.
Crucifying being a death, amongſt all violent deaths, one
of the moſt bitter: we muſt certainly be mortified to our
eaſe, before we can be mortified to our luſts, we muſt
travel in birth, before the grace of Mortification can be
formed in us. It is a woful evil in theſe days, that the
moſt part of people walk under this apprehenſion, that
there is not much difficulty to mortifie their corruptions,
but it is a token, that they never knew what it was to
mortifie them, who never knew the difficulty of Mortifi-
cation.

The third thing that is holden forth under this name of
being crucified is, that woful reluctancy and indiſpoſition
of ſpirit, which we have to this bleſſed exerciſe of mor-
tifying our corruptions; we have as great unwillingneſs un-
to it, as though we were to go to ſubject our ſelves to ſome
violent

olent death, O! how is vanity and corruption joyned
the ſpirits of the ſons of men: how loath are we to have
at woful and accurſed union betwixt us and our luſts diſ-
lved? O! how many Orators and Procurators within
ur ſelves have we to plead for this, the ſparing of our
ſts: we may be perſwaded of this, that if we be not the
ine of our iniquity, iniquity ſhall certainly be our ruine.
! how may we bluſh and be confounded ſeven days, that
e ſhould be ſo loath to have a ſeparation betwixt us and
eſe things, by which our diſtance with God and eſtrange-
ent from him, is ſo much increaſed: this vanity is un-
eakable, that we ſhould be ſo averſe from that wherein
ur eternal bleſſedneſs doth ly, in having that woful band,
hich we have wreathed about our own necks, taken off
y the bleſſed and everlaſting hands of him who hath died
nd riſen again, to accompliſh this bleſſed deſign.

Laſtly, under this word of being crucified, is held forth
ro as that compleat and ſpiritual mortification to the
orld, that this holy man attained to, he was as one dead to
eſe things: he was not much exerciſed in joy in having
e world, neither was he exerciſed in grief, by want-
g the things of the world, he was a man dead, which
uld not be moved by any of theſe things: We do not
y ſo, that *Paul* was altogether a Stoick, without all paſ-
ons of grief and ſorrow, or of joy, but we only ſay this,
at he did not grieve for the want of the world, as thoſe
ho have no hope; neither did he ſo joy in having the
orld, as thoſe who have not a more divine and high ſpring
conſolation, he was cloathed with a holy indifferency,
d a bleſſed neutrality in having or wanting theſe things;
was none of *Pauls* deſires to have the world, he had lear-
d that divine and excellent art of being content with
ery eſtate of life; he knew not what it was to murmur;
nd it were certainly much our advantage, to be provock-
to jealouſie, when we reflect upon the practice of this
oly man. I conceive, that if all that are here would ex-
ine themſelves, by how many degrees their mortifica-
on to the world, doth come ſhort of this, they might ſit
wn and conclude with themſelves, that they are yet to
gin to mortifie; yea, there are many here, to whom

we may say, that they are so far from being cloathed wit a holy indifferency in having the things of the world, tha they are cloathed with that woful and indispensible neces fity in pursuing after these things: this is the language o the most part, Give, give, men hurrying themselves i multitudes of hopes, and of fears, and of expectations, an likewise an infinit number of desires; And what is the en & result of all these things, but *vanity and vexation of spiri*

Now that you may be helped to attain this concerning duty, to be mortified to the world, we shall propose these things unto you: The first is this, be much taken up in holy contemplation and spiritual beholding of these un searchable excellencies that are in God. If once th soul of the creature were elevated to behold him, ther should not be much difficulty, to be mortified to the world were we once admitted to draw by a lap of the vail, an behold that uncreated glory and unexpressible Majesty th is treasured up in him. Mortification should be no gre difficulty: this is clearly held forth here, for *Paul* dot tell by whom he had this grace of Mortification, It wa by beholding *that pleasant plant of renown Jesus Christ*. Th is clear likewayes, 1. *Joh.* 5. 5. *Who is he that overco eth the world, but he that believeth that Jesus Christ is th Son of God?* Did we once believe that fundamental Ar ticle of faith, that he who was crucified upon the tree, wa the real *Son of God*, we should most easily win to this con cerning duty of Mortification. We may reduce all th causes of our little growth in this blessed work, to th woful ignorance *of God*, wherewith the most part of are clothed; were there a door opened to us in heave and were we in the spirit to behold him who sits upon th Throne; whose countenance is like a Sardine stone, an about whose Throne there is that rain-bow, could we pe netrat thorow these vails, wherewith both he and we ar covered, we being cloathed with the vail of our ignorance and likewise with the vail of our impurity; and he bein cloathed with these two most glorious vails, the vail of h unsearchableness, and the vail of that wonderful & unexpre sible Majesty that is in him, the one confounding the judg ment, & the other confounding the affections so that affec on and judgement in a manner is put to a none-exis

life, and both of these do sweetly resolve in that blessed one act of admiration. We need not speak much to the commendation of those unto you, who were never acquainted with him, that so ye might be perswaded to forsake your old lovers; We shall only say this, silence and admiration they shall speak least, and yet speak most: there is more divine Oratory in holy silence, and more excellent expressions in blessed admiration, than all our inventions could reach: what can man speak of him who is that unsearchable and incomprehensible Majesty? This may appear a paradox to you, that silence should speak; and admiration commend: but it is no paradox, when the object of our commendation: is by infinit degrees exalted above our blessing and our practice. O men of the world, will you once be perswaded to make that blessed divorce betwixt you and your idols, that there may be an everlasting conjunction betwixt *God* and you: O! if ye had so much divine understanding, as to judge of things according to their real wroth, *He alone should be exalted in that day*: Come and see and behold what infinit sweetness is treasured up in him, those springs wherewith ye delight your selves shall ere long dry up; but he is that high and infinit spring which alwayes floweth out, and yet is not impaired.

The second thing whereby we may attain to this blessed duty of Mortification to the world, in this, by reflecting how passing and transient those things are, wherewith the sons of men use to solace themselves. *Paul* doth press Mortification to the world from this consideration, 1. *Cor.* 7. 31. *The fashion of this world passeth away*: the word is most emphatick, this *Schema* and representation of the world, or this stage-play of the world, it passeth away; therefore, *let those that rejoyce be as though they rejoyced not, and be carefull for nothing*: this is clear. 1 *Joh.* 2, 18. and 1. *Pet.* 4. 7. did we solidly believe how changable those enjoyments of the world were, would we hurry our selves so much in our pursuits after them? Those who are lifted up in their enjoyments this day, may be thrust down low the next day: *Job*, who was a man enriched in many things, yet a few dayes, yea, we may say, a few hours made a sad and strange exchange: We may affirm that,

with great assurance of truth, *Surely man at his best estate is altogether vanity*: that word that is there (*at his best estate*) may be rendered thus, *although he stand*: *Etiamsi constitutus*, in your most fixed and settled condition in the world: this is the Emblem and Motto of your state, *vanity*, most subject to change: and why should you weary your selves in the fire for that which is very vanity?

The third thing by which ye may attain this duty of mortification, is to be much taken up in the consideration of the brevity of your life: I suppose, that if we were walking more in the house of mourning, and were believing that truth, *that it is appointed for man once to die*, and that shortly, we must be brought home unto that unchangable estate of life; O! how would this allay us in our pursuits? I think this were a little water, which we might mix with our wine, when there is greatest confidence of Creature contentments: lest the foam of this wine should distemper our head, we may mix it with this water, *the brevity of our life*. It is a sweet subject for meditation when we are most high, to be much in the consideration of this, that within a few dayes we shall be most low. What is your life but a vapour, which doth quickly evanish, and doth but appear for a little? Suppose the whole Creation should stay with you during all your time, yet how short should your enjoyment be? what is mans life, but a hand-breadth, these four finger-breadths, which is one of the least of all Geometrical measures; there is morning, forenoon, afternoon, and night, all which do amount to a day? there is infancy, youth, manhood, and old age, and these do quickly evanish and pass away. How many are hurried into eternity, in the first step of their dayes, in their infancy? And again, how many in their youth? and we have frequent experience, that many in their manhood, and in the flour of their age, that sentence cometh forth, *Return ye Children of men*: and there is not one amongst an hundred, that do attain to that utmost period that nature doth allow; and what though ye did live fourscore of years, which is the utmost period that nature hath allowed, yet doth your time quickly evanish and flee away? Why should you solace your selves with those things

that

that cannot eternally remain with you? when ye go down to the grave, you can take nothing of these things with you: for in all points as you came, so shall ye go and what profite is there that ye have laboured for the wind?

The fourth thing whereby we may be helped to attain this, is this, Be much in the mortifying of those corruptions which cannot be entertained, but by intertaining also this woful corruption of covetousnes; there are some corruptions, which have so near affinity to, as likeways dependance upon, this sin, that if these be not crushed, we cannot attain to this duty of Mortification, there is *prodigality and pride*, these two grand enemies, to the accomplishment of this blessed design: and we would begin to crush these, before we can begin to accomplish this.

There is another way which is this, be much taken up in the reflecting upon that blessed hope, and that grace which shall be brought unto you at the revelation of *Jesus Christ Peter* presseth sobriety to all things here below, by this argument, 1 Pet 1. 13. *Be sober*, and he giveth this reason of it, *for the grace that shall be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ*. O! were we much taken up in beholding that blessed estate of life, which the souls of just men made perfect shall have with *God*, where we shall enjoy, and yet not loath: there shall be an everlasting conjunction betwixt desire and enjoyment of him who is the person beloved, so that it thinks never to receive satisfaction; all it doth receive, is more to provoke its appetite, then to satisfie its desire.

There is a last, which is this, be much in the consideration of that day, when all the families of the earth shall appear before him in *the valley of decision*. This indeed would help us, to much mortification to these things of the world, as is clear from *Eccles.* ii, 9. had we the faith of that day engraven upon our spirits; that we must render an account of our wayes, O! how wary should we be in ingaging with vanity? I think the great cause why sin hath so universal a dominion over the sons of men is, because we do not solidly believe that there is such a day approaching, when we shall appear before the judgement-seat of him, who shall judge not after the seeing of the eye, nor

with great assurance of truth, *Surely man at his best estate is altogether vanity*: that word that is there (*at his best estate*) may be rendered thus, *although he stand*: *Etiamsi constitutus*, in your most fixed and settled condition in the world; this is the Emblem and Motto of your state, *vanity*, most subject to change: and why should you weary your selves in the fire for that which is very vanity?

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shall reprove after the hearing of the ear, but shall judge righteous judgement: The terror of the Lord would certainly perswade us, if we did believe this. O! what a holy unwillingness should we have in walking after the paths of our Idols.

Now we shall shut up our discourse with this, be perswaded once to begin that work of Mortification, and especially in mortifying your love to the world; he that returneth victor after war with his idols, we may call him *Joseph*, for he shall be a *fruitful bough whose branches run over the wall.* If once you spoil that grand and arch-rebel, who doth so much oppose you, in a manner; you should stand alone and sing a triumph, they should flee when none pursueth; *and we ought be be strong as a lyon, and who should rouse us up?*

Of Spiritual CONTENTMENT.

SERMON IX.

Phil. 4. 11. *I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.*

IT was *Adams* ignorance of this divine mystery of Christianity, *to be content with every estate wherein he was placed* that did bring him down from that high pinacle of his excellency, and did degrade him from that primitive glory, wherewith he was clothed, for he not being content with that precious and excellent lot, wherein *God* had placed him, but coveting after a more noble and excellent being, he came exceedingly short of this design. And such is the Anomian and woful frame of spirit wherewith men are possessed, that they can fancy no blessedness in what they are, but imagine a great blessedness

ſedneſs to be in what they are not; hence it is that men do covet the lot of others, and are diſſatisfied with their own eſtate and condition: and certainly the affections of men while they are living under theſe ſphears which are in perpetual motion, can never be ſatisfied, nor be at reſt: which was the obſervation of that maſter of experiences, *Prov.* 27. 20 *Hell and deſtruction are never full, ſo the eyes of man are never ſatisfied*; and as he ſaith, *Eccleſ.* 1. 8. *The eye is not ſatisfied with ſeeing, nor the ear filled with hearing*: And we may likewayes add, that the heart is not ſatisfied with the enjoying; and it is certainly thorow the deceitfulneſs of the ſpirit of man, and that invisible root of pride, that every lot and condition of life is ſubject to ſatiety and loathing: private men do envy the greatneſs of Princes, and Princes do envy the quiet repoſe of private men, though they will not deſcend nor reduce themſelves unto that eſtate, but do alwayes fear that, which ſometimes they are conſtrained to deſire: And believe me, a Chriſtian ſitting down ſeriouſly, to contemplat and view what an infinite multitude of hopes, fears and deſires the ſpirit of man is poſſeſſed with; as likewayes to behold how that *vanity and vexation of ſpirit*, is engraven upon the choiceſt lot that a Chriſtian can meet with here, he may be provoked to look out at the windows of his priſon-houſe, and long for that precious day, when *Chriſt ſhould be as a roe or as a young hinde coming over the mountains of Bether*, waiting to be exalted to that precious and excellent eſtate of life, where there ſhall be neither loathing nor longing: *Abel* who hath been the firſt poſſeſſor of heaven of all the houſe and family of *Adam*, and hath dwelt in it near ſix thouſand years, yet there is not in him the leaſt inclination or motion to change or alter his eſtate; there is no loathing in heaven, nor deſire to flit there; And, believe me, this divine myſtery of contentment with every lot and condition, in which a Chriſtian is placed, is not, eaſily attained. O! what repinings hath the unmortified ſpirit of man to the diſpenſations of *God*, in regulating his lot and eſtate, which doth alone ſpeak forth the *Atheiſme* of our heart: for it is, as it were, man propoſing a model, and form unto *God*, how he ſhould

rule

rule and govern the world. I think Christians are as much subject to the fashion of this contempt and pride as any. It was a noble saying of one, in the commendation of victory over a mans self, *Tunc omnia regna tenebis, cum poteris vexisse tui*, ye shall then be made a possessor of all kingdoms, when ye shall be made a ruler and king of your self. And no doubt, one that is once mortified to this passion of discontent, he may dwell upon the Mountains of *Ararat* in the midst of all the revolutions, and changes that are here below; such a Christian may sweetly contemplat the overturning of Estates and Common-wealths, and may patiently endure every lot that doth befall him, and possess his soul in patience. And certainly, if men knew but this one thing that the whole circumference of the earth, is but one point of the Universe, and that all time that hath been, is, or shall be, is but one instant, in comparison of eternity: and what is man but a part of that point and what is his life but a smal part of that instant? And why then should man anxiously complain, to spend a part of a moment in enduring the most anxious and sad things that can befall him? And, (as *Christ* doth most divinely speak) *Can a man by taking thought, add one cubit to his stature?* what poor advantage hath a man by his discontentment and sorrow, if it be not to render himself more miserable? we may say of heavenly-mindedness, and of contentment, they are like *Hippocrates* Twins, that live & die together, they are two sweet companions, that alwayes go along together, and cannot be divided.

But to descend a little more to the words, you have *Paul* in them obviating any misconstruction, that the *Philippians* might have of his joy, which he expresseth in the former *verse*, as if he had been one that was coveting great things for himself, or desiring to be great in the world, no, saith he, *I speak not these things because of want*, which formerly I had, and is now made up, for saith he, *I have learned in every estate that I am, therewith to be content.* There is no lot, saith *Paul*, but I can patiently endure it, and can with a divine complacency carry my self under it; And this he proveth in the 12 *verse*. *I know* saith he, *how to be abased*, I am instructed in this divine

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Art, how to walk ſoberly under debaſement, and I *know*, ſaith he, *how to abound*: I am not one that is puft up with a proſperous lot in the world: And leſt this aſſertion of *Pauls* ſhould ſeem to be a boaſting beyond his line, and of being exalted above meaſure, he doth ſweetly ſubjoyn that humble aſſertion. *I can do all things through Chriſt that ſtrengtheth me*; As if he would have ſaid, do not miſtake me, or conceive me under a more divine & high notion then ye ought, for I am but a poor and ſinfull man, who can do nothing of my ſelf, but as I am overacted by a divine and ſupreame hand. I am enabled to triumph over the moſt adverſe and ſiniſtrous lot, that can befal me.

The words which we have read, in the original they are moſt ſignificant and emphatick; that word which is here rendered *Content*, *is All-ſufficient*, and ſo the words may ſweetly run thus, *I have learned in every eſtate wherein I am, to be all-ſufficient*, of which that word, *Pro.* 14. 14. Is a ſweet commentary, *The back-ſlider in heart ſhall be filled with the fruit of his own way, but a godly man ſhall be ſatisfied from himſelf.* In a manner, there is a well-ſpring of everlaſting conſolation within the Chriſtian, which maketh him endure every anxious lot. And no doubt, that word *I have learned*, doth both ſpeak the difficulty of attaining this myſtery of divine contentment, as likewayes it ſpeaketh out that ignorance of this divine and noble end, wherewith *Paul* was once poſſeſſed: I was once, ſaith he, as rude as any in the knowledge of this thing, but now through the underſtanding and wiſdom of *God*, I am made perfect in the knowledge of theſe things. And that word in every eſtate, doth exceedingly commend that great pitch of Chriſtianity, unto which *Paul* had attained, there was no lot that could befal him wrong; And we ſhall only ſay this by the way, continuance of affliction is one of the greateſt occaſions of impatience that is imaginable. A Chriſtian, when firſt he meets with a croſs, may be provoked to ſalute it, and embrace it, but if it be lengthned out upon him, then he cryeth forth, *haſt thou found me, O thou mine enemy?* and then beginneth to call in queſtion the loving kind-

neſs

neſs of the *Lord*, and to complain, *that he hath ſhut up his mercies in everlaſting forgetfulneſs*; though we may ſay, in the day that a Chriſtian ſhall be paſſing *thorow the valley of the ſhadow of death*, he ſhall be ſweetly convinced of his impatiency, when a Chriſtian ſhall be conſtrained, to engrave that Motto upon the door of his everlaſting reſt, *he hath done all things well.* What thoughts will ye have of theſe riſings and debatings of ſpirit, wherewith ye have been poſſeſſed? We may imagine and not without ſome ground, that a great part of eternity ſhall be ſpent in interrogations, *Chriſt* ſhall interrogate us, if we lacked any thing while we were here below, and we ſhall be conſtrained to anſwer, *nothing*, even in that day when he ſent us forth without ſcrip, or money, or without ſandals or any thing, and thoſe that did belong to us, we ſhall be conſtrained, to ſubſcribe to the *infinite wiſdom of God*, in regulating of our lot.

Not in ſpeaking upon this divine quality and duty of divine contentment, (which we conceive, is a duty moſt requiſit in theſe dayes) we ſhall not inſiſt long in pointing out what this divine grace of contentment is, but we conceive, it includeth not only this, a ſweet and compoſed frame of ſpirit, under every anxious lot and diſpenſation with which we meet, of which that word is a commentary, *Lev.* 10: 3. where it is ſaid of *Aaron*, when his ſons were cut off, *He held his peace*, and that word, *Pſal.* 62. 1. *Truly my ſoul waiteth upon the Lord*: But the words in the original are this, *Truly my ſoul be thou ſilent unto God*, as they are rendered in the margine of the book, as if he would have ſaid, do not fret nor be diſquieted, becauſe of any thing that he carveth out unto thee.

But likewayes this grace and duty of contentment includeth, a holy complacency, and ſweet ſerenity and calmneſs of ſpirit under every lot, of which that word is a commentary, *Jam.* 1. 2 *Count it all joy when you fall into diverſe temptations*, and that word, *Rom.* 5. 3 *we glory in tribulation.* Neither ſhall we dwell long upon this, to prove that it is the duty of a Chriſtian to be content with every eſtate wherein God ſhall put him: This is clear, 1 *Tim.* 6. 8. *Having food and raiment let us*

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therewith be content, and *Heb.* 13. 5. *Be content with these things that you have*, and *Jam.* 4. 7. and *Luk.* 3. 14. And we may say, if a Christian made the world but his servant, little would content him, but if once he make the world his Master, and lord of his affections, then his desires will be infinit, and cannot at all be satisfied. We shall not long stand to inveigh against that too much addictednes of man to those passing and transient vanities of the world: we conceive there are these three things, which men do most earnestly cover, there is pleasure, riches, and honour; And certainly, these are below an immortal spirit; to fix their desires upon them: would ye have *Solomons* verdict of riches, O ye that trust in uncertain riches, ye have it sweetly in, *Prov.* 23. 5. *Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not?* In a manner, riches they have not a being, for *they take wings to themselves and they flee away*, as *Solomon* doth most sweetly speak, *Eccles.* 5. 11. *If riches increase, what profit* (saith he) *is there to the owner thereof, save to be beholder of them with their eyes*: all that the owner of riches hath, is, the seing of them, which a man, who is a passer by may likewayes have, though he be not a possessor of them. And hence is that word, *Luk.* 14. where the man desiring to be excused for not coming to Christ, saith of himself, *I have bought a peice of ground, and must needs go see it*; all his enjoyment of it was comprehended in that one poor thing, *to behold it*; And as for honour and glory, which, spirits that are more refined, and are not so wedded to the things of a world, pursue after, I would only have them knowing that one word, *Psal.* 62. 9 *Men of high degree are a lie, and men of low degree are vanity*: as if he would have said, any preheminency that one hath, that hath an excellent lot in the world above a poor one, doth consist in this, the one is a vanity, and the other a lying vanity, speaking somewhat to be in him, which is not realy in him; and that word, *Act.* 25. 23. where, speaking of *Bernice*, that came in with great pomp and glory unto the Iudge-house, the word that is there rendered *pomp and glory* is this, he came in with a great fantasie Μετα πολλης φαντασιας, with a great showand image,

mage, without any thing in reality: And as for pleasures of the world, with which these epicurean spirits of the world are so much besotted, know that verdict of *Solomon*, which he hath of these things, *Vanity of vanities, and all things are vanity and vexation of spirit*, and what can the man do that cometh after the King? If *Solomon* found no more, no doubt, none that cometh after him, can find any more.

But that which we shall speak to first upon this, shall be, what are the causes and principles from whence the discontentment of one doth flow, under any anxious or sad lot that doth befal him? And we conceive that it either doth proceed from this, a Christian not being much in the exercise of self-examination, as it is clear from that word, *Psal.* 4, 4. *Examine your selves upon your bed and be still*, speaking so much, that the compendious way unto submission and contentment under any lot, is to be much in self-examination: And certainly self-examination hath much influence upon contentment under every lot, because such a one doth most accurately take up these imperfections & blemishes that are in him so instead of complaining, he is constrained to wonder and cry forth, *Why should a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sin*: likewise one that is much in self-examination, is a man that can take up the intendment of the rod, as likewise the advantage of it, and so he is constrained patiently to bear the rod in his youth, and to sit down and adore the unsearchable wisdom of God in dispensing such things to him. That word, *Prov.* 19. 3. Is oft-times verified of us, *the heart of man perverteth his way*, and then he frets against the Lord, when he is chastned for it. O! but if a Christian were dwelling much at home, he might wonder that yet he hath a being in the world, and is not cut off from the right hand of the Lord, O! bless him eternally that ye are not sent away to be reserved in everlasting chains.

There is this likewise that doth occasion discontentment under our lot, and it is, want of that divine preparation to meet with every lot that can befal us before it come. We think a Christian ought to be general in his resolutions

to bear every croſs that Chriſt will carve out. And certainly, there are theſe two advantages that a Chriſtian hath of general and univerſal reſolutions. Firſt, he hath this advantage, that when he is chaſtned, as it were, in his goods or any other thing that belongeth to him, he begioneth to ſing a ſong of praiſe, becauſe it is not worſe with him: there can no lot befal a man who is univerſal in his reſolutions, but he will have a ſong of praiſe unto God, becauſe of it. Secondly, he hath this advantage, that foreſight and reſolution to meet with any croſs doth exceedingly diſpoſe the Chriſtian for meeting with it: we conceive that word which is *Job* 3. 25. hath had great influence on *Jobs* patience, *for the thing which I greatly feared, is come upon me:* afflictions do oft-times ſurprize us, and ſo we faint in the day of adverſity, and ſo prove our ſtrength to be but ſmall.

There is this likewiſe which occaſioneth our diſcontentment, and it is this, that little heavenly-mindedneſs, that is in a Chriſtian, when he meeteth with his rod: O! but a Chriſtian ſitting down upon mount *Piſgah*, to behold that promiſed land, might with patience bear his rod: this is clear, 2 *Cor.* 4. 16. compared with verſe 17. where *Paul* giveth this reaſon of his courage and conſtancy under his rod, that he had an eye unto thoſe things that were eternal: did ye never know what ſuch a thing meant, as to drown the thoughts of your preſent miſery, in theſe precious depths of eternity, to be beholding ſo much in heaven, as might infinitly ſolace, yea, and make up all your loſſes here. I confeſs that opinion of the Stoicks, that did commend apathie and want of paſſions unto men, that they ſhould not be much moved with grief for the want of any thing, nor be moved with joy for the having or poſſeſſing of any thing, is in ſome ſenſe good: hence was it, that in ſome ſenſe they ſpoke divinely, *nihil boni vel mali accidit homini, niſi bonus vel malus animus*: that there was no evil nor good that did befal man, but only a good and evil mind: If the heart was in a divine and ſpiritual frame, they knew not what any other ſad or anxious lot could do to them.

There is this likewiſe which occaſioneth diſcontentment,

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and it is this, the want of the taking up God as the cause and author of those sad evils which befal us; which if it were once believed, we should be ashamed to dispute and murmur so much as we do, this is clear, 1 *Sam* 3. near the close, that word of *Eli's*, *It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good*: and that word, *Psal.* 39. 9. *I was dumb, I openeth not my mouth*, and this reason is given of it, *because thou didst it*: and that word, *Isa.* 39. 8. *Good is the word of the Lord.* And certainly the murmurings and replinings of our hearts, do speak that gross Atheism that dwelleth within us: O! durst we debate with him who is Almighty, or put him to render an account of his ways, who is that supream and absolute one? Is it fit to be said to such a Prince as he is, thou art ungodly, and to condemn him who is most just? O! be much in the study of the soveraignity of God, when he, as it were, doth call us in a solemn assembly, all your terrors round about.

There is this likewise which doth occasion it, which is our little being in the meditation and serious thoughts of the brevity of our life and of time: If a man knew that it were but for an hour, or for ten days that he were to endure tribulation, he might patiently submit, and bear with his rod: this is clear, 1 *Cor.* 7. 29. compared with the following verses, where, from that doctrine that time was short, he doth infer this exhortation, *let those that weep, be as though they wept not*, as if he would have said let them not be much moved with those things, time will have a close: Believe me, it is not long before the small period of time that hath interveened betwixt eternity before and eternity after, shall be sweetly swallowed up, and there shall be nothing but eternity.

And there is this lastly which doth occasion our great discontentment, under our rod, which is, that unmortifiedness and subduedness of spirit: pride being the great predominant evil, and if we may allude to that word, *Only by pride cometh contention*; we may certainly say it holdeth well here, that only by pride are these contendings that we have with God, concerning his dispensations towards us. In sum, it is this, It is impossible for a Christian not humble, to be content: pride is one of the great

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oppoſites unto divine contentment under any rod that we meet with: O! but if a Chriſtian were humble, he might ſit in the duſt, and ſweetly adore the infinit love and patience of God.

Now we ſhall in the ſecond place propoſe ſome conſiderations, that may hinder a Chriſtian, or any other, from being diſcontent with any lot that doth befal them; and the firſt is this, that there are many ſad and woful companions of a Chriſtians diſcontentment and repining againſt any diſpenſation of God, and we conceive there is not only this bad companion, that a Chriſtian hereby is indiſpoſed and unfitted to go about ſpiritual duties, eſpecially theſe two, of prayer and praiſe: It is impoſſible for a Chriſtian that is under the exerciſe of diſcontentment, to pray or praiſe; there is ſomewhat of this pointed at, 1 *Tim.* 2. 8. where this is a qualification of a right prayer, that he ſhould be without wrath, not having any murmurings or repinings within his heart: as likewiſe it is clear concerning praiſe, *Pſal.* 57. 7, *My heart is fixed, it is fixed*, which ſpeaketh ſo much as this, that praiſe doth require a divine and compoſed frame of ſpirit: & it is moſt certain, that diſcontentment doth impede prayer, for there are three ſweet ingredients of the exerciſe of Prayer, which diſcontentment doth exceedingly cut off; there is love, fervency, and faith; which no doubt diſcontentment doth abridge; a diſcontented Chriſtian cannot be a Chriſtian burning with love; jealouſie is ſuch a predominant with him, that love cannot be his exerciſe: And certainly, if prayer do not proceed from the precious principle of love, it wants that one arm which it ought to have: Neither can a Chriſtian exerciſe faith, becauſe he hath now, as it were taken up ſo bad an opinion of God, that he cannot repoſe his confidence nor hope in him: And as for fervency they are ſo much in porring upon their preſent lot, that they can as it were, be fervent about nothing, but only in the removal of that. It is certain, that let a Chriſtian examine himſelf, there is nothing that cuts the neck of prayer ſo much as diſcontent, in a manner, the ſpirit as it were, is turned bruiſh, being uncompoſed for any ſpiritual converſe with God.

There is this bad companion likewiſe, which accompanieth

panieth diſcontentment, we are incapacitat, and rendred altogether unable to reſiſt temptations while diſcontentment is in exerciſe. It is impoſſible for a Chriſtian to be a Mortifier, or Reſiſter of luſt, when diſcontentment is once in exerciſe; And there are theſe two evils, that get moſt marvelous advantage under diſcontentment, and theſe are, the predominant luſt of ſuch a one, be what it will, and pride, theſe two evils do ſpring apace: And certainly, all other luſts do get much victory over ſuch a one: a Chriſtian may loſe more by one hours diſcontentment under a croſs, then he can regain in many Months, yea on this ſide of eternity: And it is no wonder that temptations do prevail upon ſuch a one, he is off his watch, & his ſtrength is gone: in a manner, temptation ſpeaketh that, *Their ſtrength is gone from them, let us go and put them to flight.*

There is this bad companion likewiſe, that doth accompany diſcontentment, want of tenderneſs of ſpirit, and the loſs of it, It is moſt certain, that there is nothing that doth cut off tenderneſs, ſo much as diſcontentment: for a Chriſtian that is ſuch, is not living under the impreſſion of the fear, or of the love of the Almighty, which are the two great principles of tenderneſs of ſpirit. Certainly, let one examine, they will find, that by their anxiety and bitterneſs of ſpirit, they have made their hearts to die as a ſtone within them, and have made their bands ſtrong upon their ſpirits.

And there is this laſt bad companion of diſcontentment, a Chriſtians undervaluing of all the former mercies which he hath received, when once a Chriſtian meeteth with that which contradicteth his humor, he loſeth his eſteem of every thing that formerly hath been beſtowed upon him: There is ſomething of this pointed at, *Gen.* 37. 35. in *Jacobs* impatiency in the loſs of *Joſeph*; where he doth undervalue all his mercies beſide; And it is moſt clear in that word, *Eſth.* 5. 12, 13. where, though it be ſpoken of a wicked man, yet by proportion it holdeth of a Chriſtian, that becauſe *Mordecai* did not bow his knee, he cried forth, concerning all his other mercies, *they avail me nothing*? he knew not what is was to put a price upon mercies that he had received; but becauſe this which was the

great

great luſt of his heart was away, he did undervalue the reſt: And it is moſt certain, that there is nothing doth ſo heighten a Chriſtians diſreſpect unto the moſt precious and excellent things of God, as this of diſcontent: And this is one ſubtility and device of Satan, that a Chriſtian may with greater eaſe, and with leſs conviction do it: They do ordinarily conſtruct their choiſeſt mercies, to be deluſions, and ſo upon that account begin to undervalue and miſpriſe them.

There is this conſideration, which may move you to wreſtle againſt diſcontentment, it is a character and diſtinguiſhing mark of a Chriſtian from a Reprobat: I would have Murmurers ſeriouſly to meditate upon that ſad word, which is in *Jude* 19 verſe compared with the 15. where ſpeaking of Chriſts coming to judge and execute vengeance, the firſt put in the roll are theſe, *Theſe are Murmurers and Complainers*: and that word 1 *Cor.* 10. 10. *Be not Murmurers, as many of them were, and were deſtroyed by the deſtroyer*: And certainly, it is no wonder that Murmuring paſs under ſo bad a notion, not only becauſe it is indeed that ſin, which ſpeaketh out our Atheiſm moſt, but becauſe it is that ſin which doth declare moſt a Chriſtian or any others deſire to be independent, and not in ſubjection unto God. In a manner, ſuch is the woful ambition of our ſpirit, that we deſire not to depend upon him, but that we ſhould have our own lot in our own hand, to carve out unto our ſelves. O! we know not what it is to give Chriſt a negative vote in the diſpenſations that do befal us: we love to be co-ordinat with God, and not ſubordinat to him, O! put a blank in his hand, deſire him to fill it up with what he liketh: Chriſt doth oft-times put a blank in a Chriſtians hand, as in that word, *what will ye that I ſhould do unto you*, there is Chriſts blank, that he doth give us, and though thorow our ignorance we cannot fill it up, it is beſt to give it back to himſelf, that he may fill it up, with what he liſteth.

There is this conſideration alſo, that may perſwade you deſiſt from diſcontentment; it is that ſin which doth interrupt the accompliſhment of the promiſes. As likewiſe it doth interrupt the exerciſe of faith upon the promiſes;

miſes; this is clear, *Num.* 14. 27. compared with 28. where that promiſe that was given to them of entering into the land of *Canaan*, they were cut ſhort of it, becauſe of their murmuring: and it doth interrupt the exerciſe of faith upon the promiſes, as is clear, *Pſal.* 106. 24. compared with verſe 25. where it is ſaid, *they believed not his word*, and the ground of it is given, *for they were murmurers*: And it is no wonder that murmuring interrupt the exerciſe of faith upon the promiſes; for it is impoſſible for a murmurer either to have the faith of the omnipotency of God, or to have the faith of his goodneſs or love, which are theſe two precious pillars of faith upon which it muſt build it ſelf: O! but theſe that begin once to debate with him, do quickly put faith out of exerciſe. And I would have you knowing this, that there is a diſcontentment of judgment, and a diſcontentment of the will and affections, and oft-times a Chriſtian will win over the diſcontentment of judgment and reaſon, when he cannot mortifie the diſcontentment of his will and affections; for the ſoveraignty of God; and the ſinfulneſs of our nature, will ſilence our reaſon; but, no doubt, it muſt be his own immediate hand, that muſt ſilence the murmurings of our will: this is clear, *Pſal.* 42. 5. where *David* is convinced of the unreaſonableneſs of his diſcontent, and yet he is forced to debate with his will concerning the quieting of it.

There is this conſideration likewiſe, which may provoke you to deſiſt from diſcontentment under your lot; it is a moſt unreaſonable evil for a Chriſtian to be diſcontent: for as Chriſt ſpeaketh *Matth.* 6. 27. What profit hath you by taking thought? Can you add one cubit to your ſtature? It is a poor thing, when a man hath loſt his goods, to loſe his patience alſo: what a poor revenge is that which a man taketh of himſelf? And certainly, the unreaſonableneſs of impatience under the rod, doth not only appear in this, that it hindereth and interrupteth Chriſtians ſeeing of any mercy that is in the rod, it is impoſſible for a diſcontented one to take up mercy in the ſtroak: but alſo that impatience is the compendious way for the prolonging of your ſtrait; and the involving of you in greater miſeries and thraldoms: As likewiſe, impa-

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lence doth heighten and increase the cause of your bondage, and multiplieth your iniquities: O! but it a sweet and excellent study for a Christian, to endeavour patience under every lot? And, in a manner, when we cannot read love in his hand, nor in his face, because of his frowns and stroaks, yet by faith to draw aside the vail, and read love in his heart, and cry forth, *I know the thoughts of his heart that they are thoughts of peace, and not of evil*: Certainly it is through discontentment, that we cry forth, *Though his words be as soft as oyl and butter, yet war is in his heart*; we do charge him with contradictions, betwixt his profession and his purposes.

And there is this consideration likewise, which may deter you from discontentment, which is this, It is impossible for a Christian to profite by his rod, while he is discontent: all the time that a Christian is under the fit of impatience, he spendeth so much of his time most prodigally or imploying it, not promoving that which is the great design of the rod, to take away sin, but studying to involve himself in greater captivity and bondage, and to subject himself under the hand of his iniquities. O! that ye might be perswaded to exercise more divine contentment under your lot, and that ye may be more exercised in contemplating and beholding those precious and excellent things that are above. That is a most remarkable word which *Jacob* had to *Esau*, *Gen.* 33. 11. *I have enough*: the word in the original is this, *I have all*: And as Criticks do observe, that word which *Esau* had in the 8. verse; *I have enough*, is not that which *Jacob* hath in the 11. verse, *I have enough*; that though *Jacob* was a poorer man than *Esau*, yet *he had all*: Such a Christian as hath Christ for his portion, may sweetly sing, though I be poor, yet do possess all things, *as having nothing, and yet possessing all things, as sorrowing, yet alwise rejoycing*, as poor and yet behold we are rich. It is not long before that day shall come, *when Christ shall make up his Jewels*, when there shall be a clear and most palpable difference made betwixt the precious and the vile: Behold he is upon his way, and therefore do not murmur nor repine: A Christian must not expect two heavens, it is enough if he possess

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one, we must not travel to heaven thorow a bed of roses, it is not much though we go to heaven in a fiery chariot, having afflictions and calamity our companions all along the way: when our feet shall be passing thorow the threshold of the door of our everlasting rest, then our chains shall fall from our hands, and our fetters from our feet, then might we lift up our heads with joy and rejoice. O but when those heavens which you behold shall be rolled up as a scroll, when these two great vails, the visible vail of the heavens, and the invisible vail of iniquity shall be rent from the top to the bottom, and we shall have most clear and precious discoveries of that noble plant of renown, when we shall sit down at the well head and drink and forget our misery, and remember our poverty no more; let hope evanish unto fruition, and faith unto possession, and let time sweetly evanish unto eternity.

SERMON X.

Phil. 4. 11. *I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.*

IT is an ordinary and usual error and delusion among Christians, that they place the exercise of religion in those duties that are more sublime and high unto the apprehension, as faith, hope and prayer, but undervalue the exercise of those lower duties as contentment, mortification to the world, and charity to the poor, as not being so essentially necessary for the being of a Christian. I am perswaded, that if any of you had been a hearer of the Apostle *James*, when he was discoursing upon that divine subject, wherein pure Religion and undefiled did consist, no doubt, ye would have imagined, that he would have brought forth some divine and profound thing, in the exercise of which, pure Religion before God and the Father did consist: but believe me, Religion doth more consist in practice, then in speculation, and more in obedience then in refined notions: What conceive ye of such a definition of pure Religion and undefiled, as that which

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am. 1. 27. Pure Religion and undefiled doth consist in
ortification to the world, and in charity to the poor,
ose two low undervalued duties. And this may further
gratiate and commend the exercise of these low and un-
ervalued duties, that in the day when Christ shall appear
judge the quick and the dead, the ground of the ap-
obation of his Saints shall be founded upon the low and
ontemptible duty, charity to the poor, and shall be that
ound which is given of that eternal blessedness, which
pprobation of Jesus Christ, no doubt is a confirmation of
ames his doctrine: And that which shall be the ground
f the reprobation of the wicked, shall be the neglect of
is low duty, want of charity to the poor, and visiting
f the fatherless: And believe me, in the exercise of this
vine quality of Christian contentment, not a little of
ligion doth consist: *Paul* saith, *Godliness with content-
ent is great gain.* It is by faith, that a Christian enjoy-
h God, it is by love that he enjoyeth his neighbour, and
y contentment that he enjoyeth himself. We confess
is a most mysterious and difficult lesson for a Christian
each lot he is placed in, to be crying forth, *It is good
me to be here, let me make a tabernacle here.* Ordinarly
e have strong desires to have the carving out of our own
. *Solomon* maketh mention *of three things, that are not
tisfied, and of four things that never say it is enough, the
ave, the barren womb, the earth that is not filled with wa-
r, and the fire.* And we may add unto these four, this
e fifth, the most part of men who are unsatisfied: their
t: It is no wonder that men unlimited in their desires,
eet with great disappointments, for those that have ex-
bitant and excentrick desires, must have great hopes,
like-wise great disappointments: Therefore it were
rtainly your advantage, to be studying to compendize
d abridge your desires after these things that are here
low: for as one spoke well, he conceived that the grea-
st riches of a man did consist in poverty of desires, and
being content with that lot, wherein God had placed
m. There are only these three things that befal a Chri-
ian, under which it is great difficulty for him to attain
contentment; there is the loss of his predominant lust

and idol, especially if it be any whit refined and vail under the vail and vizard of any vertue, as if one be even unto the seeking of the applause of the world, there nothing under which there is so great a difficulty to exe cise contentment, as in the losing of the applause, o hearts oft times crying forth, *they have taken away my go and what have I more?* And certainly, oft times our ju dic unto us, before we die unto them, which is the occa on that our living lusts, do sit down and lament over graves of our buried idols and wisheth that they may wake and stand up from the dead. And we shall only to such, *woe to you, when all men shall speak well of y* which may hinder people from pursuing after that Ido but much more especially that word, *Joh* 5. 44. *How* ye believe, *that seek glory one of another*; which words see to import an inconsistency betwixt the exercise of fai and betwixt the exercise of pursuit after idols.

There is this likewise that befalleth a Christian, und which it is a great difficulty for him to attain to conte ment, and that is the continuance and lengthning for of any affliction that doth befal him; Oft-times a Chr stian; when first he meeteth with his cross, will salu and imbrace it, and will cry forth, *this is a grief, an must bear it*: but when the threed of our affliction is sp out unto any length, then we begin to be discontent a to cry forth, *hast thou found me, O thou mine enemy?* Th was clear to the exercise of *Job*, who when first he m with his cross, did express divine contentment under most eminent way, crying forth, *blessed be the Name of Lord*; when he was made to possess months of vanity, wearisom nights were appointed for him, then he cry forth, *I choose strangling and death, rather than life.* A we shall only say to such, be much in the meditation that precious and immense hope, and go up to the top Mount *Pisgah* and there be with *Moses* in the viewing that land which is afar off As likewise, study to seal th divine conclusion, that he doth all things well.

There is this thirdly which befalleth a Christian, und which he hath a great difficulty to exercise contentme which is, poverty and want in the world. *Solomon* w

was well acquainted with his own heart, and knew well his unsuitableness to bear such a cross, cryeth forth, *Prov.* 30. 8,9. *Give me not poverty, lest I steal, and take the name of my God in vain.* It is certain, that to exercise faith upon God, for the receipt of common mercies, is more difficult, then to exercise faith on God for our eternal salvation, and for our interest in Jesus Christ. And we conceive, that the reason why a Christian findeth greater difficulty, to exercise faith upon God, for the receipt of these common mercies, than for the receiving of that cardinal and unspeakable mercy, salvation through Jesus Christ, to be either this, that faith, when it is exercised upon the one, most simply and immediatly relyeth upon the omnipotency and faithfulness of God, abstracted from all other props and considerations, for there, sense and reason doth contradict the exercise of faith; but when Christians do exercise faith upon God for righteousness and salvation, they ordinarily have either somewhat of sense, or somewhat of holy reason, that doth under prop and help their faith: and this likewise is the occasion of it, that not so ordinarily a Christian is put to the exercise of the one, as unto the exercise of the other: But believe me, it is no small difficulty, for a Christian to act confidence upon God, when he is redacted unto a low and pinching estate in the world: And we shall only say to such who murmure and repine under such an estate; cast your eyes upon him who was the heir of all things, of whom it is recorded, *that he had not so much as where to lay his head*, As likewise, cast your eyes upon a number of that precious cloud of witnesses, who are now entred into the everlasting possession of that precious and excellent lot, who were constrained to wander in Dens and caves of the earth, having sheep and goat-skins for their cloathing. Ye are now in the estate of your minority, and therefore ye are rich but in hope and expectation, and so ye may dispense, though ye be not rich in possession: though we may say, a Christian that hath *him who is all, in all* must of necessity enjoy all and all.

Now that which we shall further speak upon this divine quality of contentment, besides these things which we spoke

poke at the laſt occaſion, we ſhall point out a little, the difficulty of attaining unto contentment under every lo and eſtate that a Chriſtian falleth in: The difficulty of it i fully ſhown in that word, I *have learned*, as it were It ſpeaketh ſo much as this, once *Paul* was an ignorant o this myſterious leſſon of divine contentment, but he wa inſtructed by him, who is that Prince of Paſtors, by whom he did attain to the knowledge of this: and this ſpeake forth the difficulty of it, that a Chriſtian muſt be muc in ſelf-examination, and ſelf-ſearching before he can attai unto contentment: there is ſomewhat of this pointed a *Pſal.* 4. 4. *Examine your ſelves upon your beds*, and there a promiſe annexed to this, *and ye ſhall be ſtill*, *or be ſtill* And the influence that ſelf-examination hath upon th divine quality of contentment, may not only appear in thi that a Chriſtian who is much in reflecting upon himſelf, t keth up ordinarily a ſuitableneſs betwixt the croſs and h humour, as it were, he ſeeth infinit wiſdom ſhining, carving out ſuch a lot and diſpenſation unto him, and is conſtrained to adore the unſearchable riches of the wi dom of God: As likewiſe, its influence may be ſhown i this, that a Chriſtian who is much in ſelf-examination, do behold ſuch ſpots and blemiſhes in himſelf, that he is fo ced to wonder, that it is not worſe with him, and ſo conſtrained to glorifie God in the fire. I confeſs, it ma be a wonder, that this is not a wonder unto a Chriſtian very day, that he is not conſumed, and cut off from h right hand. O! that ye would once be much in the ſtudy o your ſelf: That ancient advice of a heathen, *γνωθι σεαυτ know your ſelf*, were worthy to be practiſed by all Chri ans; we are too much roving abroad, & too little at home Is reported of ſome Beaſts, that they have eyes to ſee abroa but have no eyes to ſee at home; which no doubt is the c and exerciſe of the moſt part who live in theſe days.

This likewiſe pointeth forth the difficulty of attaini to this duty of contentment, that a Chriſtian before he c attain it, muſt be much in the exerciſe of theſe two card nal graces. Faith and love, certainly, till once we b ſtudying the exerciſe of them, contentment will be at low and weak ſtanding with us: And no doubt, the exe

ise of faith, not only in concluding our interest in Jesus Christ, and in sealing that conclusion, that he is ours, is most necessary for attaining of contentment; but likewise the exercise of faith for attaining of contentment may be shown in this, that faith is that grace, which is the best interpreter of the dispensations of God: This may be recorded to the commendation of the grace of faith, that knoweth not, what it is to bring up a bad report upon God. And certainly as long as we consult with these three bad counsellors, sense, reason, and misbelief about the dispensations of God, this will be the result of that counsel to have sorrow in your heart dayly, but study to employ that wise counsellor Faith, which sometimes, because is so intelligent a grace, is called Understanding, as is clear from *Col.* 2. 2. Now this is clear, that faith hath influence upon contentment, 2 *Sam.* 23. 5. where *David* from this, that God had made with him an everlasting covenant, he cryeth forth, I am not much anxious, though other things should fall, *and though my house should not be so with God:* so likewise it is clear, *Psal.* 142. 4, 5. where the exercise of faith upon this, *that God was his portion*, made him with patience to submit though all refuge should fail him, and *though none upon his right hand, or his left hand would care for his soul*; As likewise, *Psal.* 37. 1. compared with verse 3. where he presseth that duty of trusting in God, by which they may obviat the exercise of discontent and fretting. Love likewise no doubt, must be exercised, before a Christian do attain unto this divine quality of contentment: There are these two precious properties of love which are given, 1 *Cor.* 13. 4, 5 *Love endureth long, and love thinketh no evil*, which, no doubt, have great influence upon contentment; we confess love sometimes the most impatient grace of a Christian, and sometimes the most patient grace of a Christian; in a manner, love when it is in its most vigorous exercise, will endure more afflictions then faith; Faith sometime will be languishing & giving over, when love will support and strengthen it being afraid to seal that woful conclusion, that he is not ours; love knoweth not what it is to entertain jealous thoughts of him, who is the lover. *it thinkith no evil:*

And certainly, when the grace of love is in its vigorous exercise, it is most tender to act any thing, by which the person that is loved may be wronged, or a bad report may be brought up upon him. A Christian that is united unto precious Christ, by that golden and invisible chain of his beauty, and transcendent excellency, can with patience endure the loss of all things beside Christ; love is peremptory in nothing but this, the enjoyment of the loved: And love is sorrowful for nothing, but the loss of him who is loved: he moveth in so high a sphere, and is so far elevat above all things that are here below, that in a manner, he possesseth his soul in patience in the midst of those revolutions and changes that are here below; in a manner, the grace of love doth incorporat a Christian in Jesus Christ, and doth make him to dwell in Christ as his mansion and house, and so he is not much taken up with those things that are abroad.

There is this likewise, which speaketh forth the difficulty of attaining unto divine contentment, and it is this, a Christian must be much in the exercise of the grace of Mortification to all these passing and transient vanities of the world; do not these risings and murmurings of spirit, speak the little exercise of Morrification that is amongst us? for if we were once mortified to the world, we should then exercise contentment under every lot: this is clear from the comparing of these two places, *Psal.* 119. 29. where *David* saith, *I have seen an end of all perfection*, which speaketh forth that distinct discovery that he had of the vanity of the world: in a manner, he had it brought within his sight, which is one of the most unerring senses, compared with that most remarkable place; which breath forth much of divine contentment in him 2 *Sam* 15. 25, 26. where he saith *But if he say I have no delight in thee, behold, here am I, let him do unto me, as seemeth good unto him.* Here, in a manner, is *David* making a resignation of his crown, and seeing an end of the perfection of that glittering and passing vanity. As likewise it may be shown from the paralleling of these two places, *Gal.* 6. 14. where *Paul* saith of himself, *I am crucified to the world, and the world is crucified to me*: in a manner, *Paul* and the world

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ude a ſorrowleſs parting, as two dead men parting one om another: and the words that we have read, where e breatheth forth this divine quality of contentment. I ink certainly a Chriſtian reflecting upon the changeableneſs, inconſtancy and vexation of things here below, will not be much moved with the loſs of them. It was upon this ground that heathens did attain unto ſuch a pitch in this divine quality of contentment, for they beholding that fear and deſires were the two inſeparable companions of thoſe that had moſt of their fancied delights of the world; for even thoſe that have the greateſt abundance, are vexed betwixt theſe two paſſions, fear and deſire: fear to loſe what they have attained, and deſire to attain more: We conceive, that it is a remarkable thing that is recorded of *Seſoſtris* King Egypt, who was ſo ambitious, that he would needs have his chariot drawn with four Kings, one of which had his eye continually upon the motion of the wheel of the chariot, which the King obſerving, did ask him the ground why he did ſo exerciſe himſelf? He did moſt fitly reply, it putteth me in mind of the mutability and changeableneſs of the things of the world; for ſaith he, the higheſt part of the wheel is inſtantly the loweſt part, and the loweſt part of the wheel, is inſtantly the higheſt; which moved that ambitious Prince to deſiſt from ſo ambitious a practice: And believe me, if ye would read that inſcription upon the forehead of all things, *vanity and vexation of ſpirit*, ye might eaſily attain unto contentment.

There is this fourthly which ſpeaketh forth the difficulty of attaining unto contentment, that a Chriſtian before he win to it, muſt neceſſarily be mortified unto that innate & connatural idol of pride: Pride muſt be oncebrought low, before contentment can be attained: We conceive, diſcontent & pride have ſworn a covenant of agreement, that they ſhall be undivided in their life, & undivided in death, they are chained together by an unchangeable chain of amity; and believe me, it is impoſſible for a Chriſtian to be diſcontent, but he muſt of neceſſity be proud; And upon the contrary, a Chriſtian that is proud, he muſt of neceſſity be a diſcontented one; for there is nothing that

is the mother of contentment so much, as humility, which moveth a Christian silently to bear his yoke, and to sit down and put his mouth in the dust, because he hath done it. In a manner, a humble one, and one that hath distinct knowledge of his own baseness, knoweth not what it is to cry forth, *Why am I thus?* Such a one is much in admiration, and little under murmuring, much in praise and little in complaint.

There is this lastly, which pointeth forth the difficulty of it, a Christian cannot win to contentment, without he be much in heavenly mindedness, and have his spirit in a spiritual and heavenly frame. There is somewhat of this pointed at, *Joh.* 14. 1. compared with the 2. *v.* where Christ proposing a remedy unto the discontentment of the Disciples, *that their souls should not be troubled*, he doth begin a discourse of heaven, *that in his Fathers house were many mansions*, and that they had an interest into it: Also likewise, there is somewhat of this pointed at, *Mat.* 6. 25 26. where to obviat their taking thought what they should eat, or what they should drink, or wherewith they should be cloathed, he desireth them *to seek first the Kingdom of God*. And certainly one that is much taken up in the contemplation of eternal life, and who is viewing these precious and endless delights that are at his right hand, moveth in a most composed and divine frame, in a manner, he drowneth the thoughts of his present miseries in those precious depths of eternity: he knoweth that one moment of the enjoyment of precious Christ, shall fully recompense and make up all those sorrows that he hath met with. I know not what shall be the thoughts of Christians, when that volumn of the mercies of the Lord, shall be presented unto them, which they have met with here below: how may they be filled with admiration to see that book written within and without, of the receipts of most singular and precious demonstrations of his love.

We shall secondly speak a little to provoke you to the pursuit of his divine quality, and so to these advantages that a Christian hath by exercising contentment under every lot: We conceive, It is so excellent a grace, this grace

of

of contentment, that it is indeed a compound of these five graces, Faith, Humility, Patience, Hope, and Mortification; in a manner contentment is the result of all these graces, exercising themselves in one; and except those be in a most vigorous exercise, that absolute contentment is not easily to be attained: but no doubt, it must be an excellent thing that deriveth its pedegree and descent from so high and excellent things, as those precious graces of the Spirit. But the first advantage that a Christian hath by divine contentment, under his sadest lot, is this, it doth advance a Christian unto most nigh fellowship and correspondence with God; as likewise a contented one receiveth most sweet manifestations of the presence and fellowship of God with him under his cross: It is most certain, that contentment when it is attained, is ordinarily accompanied with most nearness and correspondence with him: there is somewhat of this pointed at, *Heb.* 13. Where pressing that doctrine of contentment, he saith, *the Lord will not leave you nor forsake you*, which, though we confesse it be principally understood of his providence, yet it may include the manifestations of his presence: as likewise that in *Jam.* 4. 7. *Humble your selves under his hand*, which he is pressing from this duty of contentment, *and he shall lift you up*: And no doubt, that invitation doth oft-times come to a contented Christian, *Come unto me from Amana, and from the top of Shenir, and from the mount Lebanon*, Can. 4. 8, Christ loveth to dwell with one that walketh in a composed and silent frame of spirit: And the reason why a contented Christian enjoyeth much of God under his Crosse, is because he is much in Prayer; it is impossible for a discontented Christian to pray to any purpose under his Crosse, for he wanteth that divine qualification that is required in Prayer, *to lift up his hands without wrath*, the Soul is in such a confused and distempered frame, *it is so troubled that it cannot speak*; this is taken from *Ps.* 77. 4; or 5. *v.* where *David* had this advantage by his discontent, *I am so troubled*, (saith he) *that I cannot speak*: though we conceive that there is that which is imitable in David in that case, that a Christian when he cannot speak, he may make this Prayer, *I am so trou-bled*

troubled that I cannot speak, which was *Davids* practice in that Psalm: There is this second advantage that a Christian hath by the exercise of divine contentment, the want of it doth exceedingly obstruct and hinder a Christian in improving of the Crosse for his advantage: a Christian that is discontent cannot receive my advantage by his Crosse; there is somewhat of this pointed, *Heb.* 12. 11. where the peaceable fruits of righteousnesse flow to a Christian that is exercised under his Crosse, which no doubt doth take in the divine quality of contentment. There are these three precious advantages, that a Christian may have by his Crosse, which discontent doth exceedingly obstruct: there is the exercise of humility, the exercise of Prayer, & the exercise of mortification: one that is discontent, doth obstruct that great advantage of the crosse, even humility; he is so much in repining against the dispensation of God, that he cannot at all sit down, and fold his feet and quietly bear his yoke. O! but contentment includes in its bosome much divine humility: In a manner a Christian when he is content, is clothed with it: discontentment is the mother of Pride, & doth add fuel unto that fire: discontent doth likewayes obstruct mortification & conformity with God, which is the precious end of the crosse, *he doth chastise us, that we may be partakers of his holinesse*: And this is the fruit of all these things, to take away your sin. And certainly, a discontented Christian cannot be a Christian taken up in mortification; yea it is most certain, that a Christian may lose more by one hours discontent, than he can gain in many days, yea on this side eternity; O! to what a length may discontent lead one! Likewise it doth obstruct the exercise of prayer, which is a precious end of the crosse, *in their affliction they will seek me early, and when my chastening hand is upon them, they will then pour forth their prayers into my bosom:* but one that is in a distempered and discontented frame, is incapacitate to go about this duty of prayer, he is so much in conversing with his crosse, that he cannot be much in conversing with God: And that is certainly one great defect in a Christian, that they are more taken up in studying the disadvantages of the crosse, then in studying the advantages

vantages of it; the most part of us, will be Orators like Cicero in declaiming our calamities, & in setting them forth to the full, as it is clear in *Job*, who proved a most eloquent Orator in setting forth his calamities, but in the exercise of praise, our tongues stick to the roof of our mouth, and we are silent unto God. There is this third advantage that a Christian hath by the exercise of contentment, it doth obviat and obstruct many temptations, that a Christian is lyable unto by his discontentment. I know not any sin in Scripure that hath produced such bad and woful effects, as that sin of discontentment: what made *Ahitophel* to seek a cord, and go hang himself, was it not his discontent? discontent is the mother of most sad and desperat resolutions; for we cannot submit unto our crosse, and therefore we study to extricat our self out of our crosse, by envolving and entring our selves into that endless and unsupportable crosse. Therefore we would desire you under your afflictions to study contentment: O! what atheistical thoughts will lodge in the bosom of of one that is discontent: we may see them clearly in the practice of *David*, who cryeth forth under his discontentment, *I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency*. Certainly there is nothing that will occasion the want of the faith of the existency of a Deity, and that there is not a God, so much as this of discontentment. There is this fourth advantage that a Christian hath by his contentment, it maketh the crosse most easie to a Christian: would you know what is the greatest ingredient of the heavinesse of any crosse, it is discontent: It is certain, that we make our chain more heavy and more unsupportable upon our necks; whileas, if we were studying this fine quality of contentment, it should abate much of the bitterness of the crosse: we may say to one that hath gained to contentment, they may cry forth, *the bitterness of death is past*, and may thus triumph over their crosse, *O crosse where is thy sting, and O affliction, where is your victory?* Certainly, discontent is that which maketh us to frown, and cry forth, *my stroak is heavier than my groaning*. Did you never know what it was to bear your affliction with much inward joy and peace of mind, when you had this grace of contentment. There

There is this advantage likewise that a Christian hath by exercising contentment under his cross, that he meeteth with; It is a compendious way for a Christian to win an outgate under his cross. Would you know what is the most compendious way, to have the threed of your affliction spun out unto a long length? then study discontentment: But would you know what is the most spiritual and compendious way to have the rod taken off, and to have God, no more to turn about the face of his Throne, then study contentment: In a manner, the cross hath gotten and obtained that end and errand why it was sent, when you do attain to contentment and humility under it: We may say of the sin of discontent, that it is a most irrational and reasonless sin, for you cannot by your discontent, extricat your self out of your calamities; all the advantage that you have by it is this, to make your bonds stronger upon your spirits, and to have your fetters and chains lying more heavily upon you.

There is this advantage likewise that a Christian hath by the exercise of contentment under every rod that he meeteth with, it is that divine quality of the soul by which a Christian doth attain to most mortification unto the pleasures and vanities of a world. O! how sweetly will a contented Christian, under the loss of things here below, speak to the dispraise of these fancied images? it is a poor sight, to behold a living substance tyed unto shaddows by these two iron chains of love and delight. Ought we not to study so much holy ambition and spiritual generosity, as to undervalue all things that are below God, as being below us? In a manner, as *Jonadab* spoke to *Amnon*, 2 *Sam.* 13. 4. *why art thou, being a King's son, lean from day to day*? We may likewise bespeak the heirs of the promise, and those that are begotten by a lively hope, who being the children of him who is the King of Kings, do you wax lean for the loss or want of those things that are here below? Have you not a kingdom? Are you not, why then should you repine at the loss of these things which are but passing and transient vanities? That which is the great idol of the world, silver and gold, what is it but more refined dust? It is white and yellow clay: Are

we conceive, that much of the excellency of it doth consist in the estimation of men that they have so valued it: but one that hath the assurance of eternal life, and that God is theirs, may walk thorow the wilderness with joy. We confess, it is an evil amongst the heirs of promise, that they love to go to heaven thorow a most easie and pleasant way, they love to walk to that palace of everlasting rest, thorow a valley of roses; but we must not meet with two heavens, it is abundance, if we have that one eternal and everlasting heaven. And as for the cause of discontent under our cross, or any calamity that we meet with, we conceive pride and want of mortification are those two catholick and general grounds of all our discontent and impatiency.

We shall shut up our discourse upon this divine quality of contentment, desiring that men that have abundance of the world may study contentment: though this may seem a paradox unto many, why those that have enough, should yet be desired to pursue after contentment: We conceive, there are none more discontent, then those that have the greatest occasion of contentment; their desires are so much wedded unto things here below, that that voice is never heard among them, *It is enough*, and *I am satisfied*: I conceive, that may fully confute that vain opinion that Christians and others do intertain, that if they had such a competency of the world, they would be discontent no more, but would silently make on in their way; and that which is the ground of their discontent is (as they alledge) the want of a competency of subsistence: I shall only say to you, that which is recorded of *Alexander*, who after he had purchased the possession of the world, he was so far from attaining to contentment (as it is recorded of him) he sat down and wept, because there was not another world to purchase. And believe me, this is most undenyable, that if you cannot attain to contentment under your present lot, it is impossible for you to attain to contentment when your lot is better; it is only the delusion of Sathan, under which the evil of your discontent is vailed.

But as for those that have abundance of these worldly goods,

goodly, we shall press this exhortation upon them which is *Prov.* 23. 4. *Labour not to be rich*, which is a thing that ye will not easily close with, though certainly riches (as the text most divinely speaketh) are a thing that is not. Now this is most clear that there is a necessity of pressing these who have abundance of the world to be content, where *Paul* doth subjoyn in the following words, *I know* (saith he) *how to abound*. People might have imagined that is no great lesson, but believe me, it is a great if not greater, than the other, which is that by which we would press contentment to those that are poor in their lot and estate that they fall in here below: know this that the day is coming, when ye shall acknowledge infinite wisdom in guiding you to heaven by that way. O give Christ a negative vote in the dispensation of your lots, and be content to be regulated by him, who is that wonderful counsellor, who, though he lead you by a way that ye know not, yet take Christs advice upon implicit faith, for he knoweth not what it is to disappoint any of their expectations. Study contentment, for that is heaven brought down to earth: for what is the happiness and blessedness of those that are above? It is confined in this one word, Contentment, they have now all anxiety and all loathing, and all desires save one, taken away from them. O! what a life must it be to drink of the rivers of pleasures? Did you ever know or read of such a river, the waters whereof were pure delight and pleasure? when we shall sit down, and be overjoyed with these consolations, that shall flow from his face, when we shall draw forth that endless line and period of eternity, in having joy and light flowing in, admiration and praise flowing out: believe me, the gleanings of a Christian, are better then the vintage of a reprobate; *Like that a righteous man hath, is better, than the riches of many wicked*, for it is a messenger of hope, of that more enduring substance which Christ shall give; And if it is the exercise of those that are above, let it be the exercise of those that are below, that there may be a sweet conformity and harmony betwixt the practice of that higher house, and the practice of this lower

house, that we may have our souls united unto him *who is perfumed with all the powders of the merchant, and whose garments do smell of myrrhe and aloes.* Believe this, time shortly is to have a period, and eternity is to come. Let a Christian comfort himself in this, eternity is at hand, when they shall hear that voice, and truth sealed by the oath of an Angel, *time shall be no more:* Let that precious day come, and let all other days pass away.

And truth seale by the oath of an angel time shall be no more let that

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